

Phantasmagoria

Collected Essays on the Nature of Fantasy and Horror Literature

Roger C. Schlobin

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PHANTASMAGORIA:

COLLECTED ESSAYS ON THE NATURE OF FANTASY AND HORROR LITERATURE

by Roger C. Schlobin



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Dedications

To My Matchless Wife and Long-Suffering Proofreader, Margaret Ann ("Peggy") Novotny;

To My Loving Sister, Susan G. S. McGee, Who Is My Great Source of Pride and Admiration;

> and to Prince Gustave ("Gus"), Who Adopted Us and No Others.



a.k.a. The Big Sweetie, a.k.a. The Mouth from the South



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- "Danger and Compulsion in *The Wind in the Willows* or Toad and Hyde Together At Last." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 8.1 (1997): 34-41.
- "Dark Shadows and Bright Lights: Generators and Maintainers of Utopias and Dystopias." In *The Utopian Fantastic: Selected Essays from the Twentieth International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts.* Ed. Martha Bartter. Westport, CT, and London: Praeger, 2004. 11-16.
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- "Fantasy and Its Literature." "Introduction" to *The Literature of Fantasy: A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography of Modern Fantasy Fiction* (New York and London: Garland, 1979).
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- "The Femivore: An Undiscovered Archetype." *The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* Spring 1989: 87-97.
- "The Formulaic and Rites of Transformation in Andre Norton's Magic Series." In *Fiction for Young Readers*. Ed. C.W. Sullivan III. Westport, CT: Greenwood. 1993. 37-45.
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- "Pagan Survival: Why the Shaman in Modern Fantasy?" In *The Celebration of the Fantastic: Selected Papers from the Tenth International Conference on the Fantastic in the Arts.* Ed. Donald E. Morse, Marshall B. Tymn, and Csilla Bertha. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992. 39-47. Rpt. *Hungarian Studies in English* 1.1 (1995): 5-12.
- "Prototypic Horror: The Genre of the Book of Job." Semeia No. 60 (1992): 22-38.
- "'rituals' footprints ankle-deep in stone': The Irrelevancy of Setting in the Fantastic." *Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* 11.2 (2000): 154-63.
- "The Survival of the Fool in Modern Heroic Fantasy." In Aspects of the Fantastic: Selected Essays of the Second International Conference on the Fantastic in Literature and Film. Ed. William Coyle. Westport, CT: Greenwood, 1986. 123-30.
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PREFACE

The gatherings of the essays in this collection (originally intended for a university press) have taken me from the beginning of my life to now. It began with my imitation of my mother's voracious reading and my fascination with science fiction and fantasy in bookstores while mother perused the romances. I read everything in the high school library. While my Ph.D. is in medieval languages and literature with an emphasis on the Arthurian, my publications and teaching led me to find my own way to the fantastic. When I published *The Literature of Fantasy* in 1979, it included over 500 authors and still stands as the definitive, annotated bibliography for the field. I wish someone would update it.

My self-initiated deviation from traditional academic fields, which some thought very strange, really began at The Ohio State University where I was encouraged to read everything. It was very traditional training, and I was taught to research my interests so I didn't repeat the past and would build for the future. There was no reinventing the wheel. For this, I am eternally grateful to Francis Lee Utley, Christian Zacher, and the other members of the English Department. The essay here on *The Book of Job* as horror demonstrates the results. Having never had any formal training in the Bible, I read and read and read. Once the essay was published, suddenly, I became a specialist and a sought-after reviewer.

Rereading the essays reminded me of the many, many friends who encouraged and inspired me over the years, especially those who attended the amazingly generative Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts. Watching the Conference and Association grow and prosper over the decades has been one of the joys of my life. There, the study of the fantastic gained legitimacy as an academic field, and *The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts* became the penultimate source of fantastic scholarship. I am especially delighted to include Carl B. Yoke's essay on the sidekick here. As a lifelong friend of Roger Zelazny, Carl's insights are unique. Its quality is the reason I never ventured there.

The original purpose of this collection was to publish it with a prestigious university press as a study of the invaluable place that secondary, archetypal characters hold in literature. However, teaching four classes of first-year writing a semester stalled my research in 2006. The working bibliography is published here in an appendix for someone, hopefully, to build upon. Then, retirement and back surgery made the tedious steps of publishing with a university press superfluous.

These days Gus, our large Norwegian Forest cat, keeps me company as I read and write. When I get too serious, he lies in front of the monitor and reminds me that all is not intellectual.

Thus, this treasure trove is here in the hope that it might save my labors from the deep and dusty archives of refereed journals and anthologies and inspire others to build more futures.

ENJOY!

FANTASY AND ITS LITERATURE

Fantasy was born neither in literature nor art. It is one of the original qualities that distinguished humanity from the flora and fauna of its first beginnings. In some dark cave perhaps in Africa, perhaps in Asia-an odorous organism felt the first stirrings of that mental activity that was to metamorphose it from survivor into creator. Much has been made of those who discovered fire and wheel, but the nascent discoveries of self, mind, and idea relegate mechanistic achievements to the level of simple crudities. It was for this primitive creatureunderstanding so little of herself or himself-to create and develop humanity's most precious characteristic: the power of fantasy, the power to create ex-nihilo, out of nothing. It is difficult for the modern mind to comprehend the measureless achievement of his primitive forebear. Concepts such as "I," "you," "mate," "friend," and "time" are so automatic as to be allied with breathing. Yet, for anyone who has ever watched a baby begin to stir to self-awareness and consciousness, some small empathy may exist with the triumphant movement from organism to cave painter, from single entity to social being, from existence to consciousness. It must have been an agonizing process, one conceived in necessity, forged in isolation. Fortunately, humanity progressed from necessary preoccupation with externals to awareness of the internal and began to shape and interrelate its world, and distinguished between the inner and outer, between inner reality and outer appearance. It was upon inner reality that humans built themselves and their relationships, societies, civilizations, and, most importantly, their cultures.

People live in this inner awareness. Besieged by externals and simultaneously shaping these externals through their minds, they are constantly the creators and, in the eons that have passed since that first burgeoning of awareness, have distinguished themselves as "homo fantasia, the visionary dreamer and mythmaker." In this role, they have populated the cosmos with spirits and demons, religions and philosophies, social orders and political systems, rituals and myths, laws and mores, boundaries and belonging, hopes and expectations—all created first in the mind. And these vitally important involvements have arisen from the inner person, all without initial external actuality. Erich Neumann, in *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*, accurately summarizes the enormity of these activities:

The decisive part played by psychic reality—as depth psychology is just beginning to discover—is a more powerful influence behind the scenes that the naive consciousness of average Western man has ever dreamt of. Individuals and groups—and nations, too, and

movements of history—are conditioned by the power of inner psychic realities which often enough appear in the first places as fantasies in the mind of an individual. This influence of the inner world is to be found at work in such diverse spheres as politics and religion, technology and art. War and destruction are repeatedly let loose to devastate the world at the behest of men driven by fantasies of power; at the same time, the inner images of creative artists become the cultural possession of the whole human race.²

Although Neumann perceptively elevates fantasy to a grand level, this is not to say that its creative power is not present on the mundane plane. By means of perception, "Fantasy helps determine what we consider to be fact just as surely as the other way around." It is an essential quality, along with some sense of identity and place, in every person, unlike the sense of identity and place that maintains existence, fantasy is the characteristic that creates existence:

Fantasy-images are both the raw materials and finished products of psyche, and they are the privileged mode of access to knowledge of soul. Nothing is more primary. Every notion in our minds, each perception of the world and sensation in ourselves must go through a psychic organization in order to "happen" at all. Every single felling or observation occurs as a psychic event by first forming a fantasy-image.⁴

For no one stands alone. Through participation in what C.G. Jung has labeled the "collective unconscious," every person inherits the sum total of the species' experience. Occasionally confused or identified with instinct, this legacy is inherited and manifests itself through archetypes visible through major symbols that characterize the natures and activities of all societies and all cultures and that are coordinated in patterns. Whether they be the patterns of rites of passage and initiation or the persuasive symbol of the "Great Mother," they work through the activity of fantasy to create myth, art, religion, and behavior:

Just as the archetypes occur on the ethnological level as myths, so also they are found in every individual, and their effect is always strongest, that is, they anthropomorphize reality most, where consciousness is weakest and most restricted, and where fantasy can overrun the facts of the outer world.⁷

Fantasy, then, is an everyday, natural activity that summons and creates images and converts them into external manifestations. As imaginative activity, it

is the "direct expression of psychic life." Fantasy recognizes all possibilities in human nature. Humanity's capacities for tool making and system making have been legitimately applauded, but if these activities had not been conceived internally first and if the eternal world of meaning had not evolved, mankind would be indistinguishable form highly sophisticated social insects. The visible world is simply the "subcreation" of the inner, 10 for fantasy gives "form to thought"11 and is the "richest source of human creativity."12 As a social activity, it is well-spring of myth, ritual, religion and play; as a cultural activity, it is the source of art. Universally, it supplies the will with needed content, 13 purpose, and focus. On one hand, fantasy brings humanity closest to its oldest self14 through the collective unconscious and archetypes, but on the other, it is the essence of imaginative culture, which "transcends the limits of both the naturally possible and of the morally acceptable." 15 When individuals participate in their fantasies or share the most disciplined imaginings of artists, they travel, as gods, on a road where the world is created ex-nihilo. They experience rare dreams or sensations for the first time; 16 break traditions 17 and violate ritual; open non-empirical, 18 visionary¹⁹ doors; and find that, as the journey continues, their minds expand and are enriched by their capacities and their links with the most essential past.

Moreover, as the mythopoetic force that it is, fantasy shares myth's capacity to impinge upon "that awesome ultimate mystery which is both beyond and within himself [man] and all things"²⁰ Intellectually, it is the state from which words turn back, where "mythological symbols touch and exhilarate centers of life beyond the reach of the vocabularies of reason and coercion."²² Fantasy, as a personal and artistic experience, involves its practitioners in a quest in which archetypes and primordial images come alive.²³ In this process, they participate in the collective unconscious²⁴ and the suspension of everyday concerns and preoccupations. Thus, fantasy lures its followers into an examination of their own natures, the seminal truths of their existences, and an extension of the frontiers of their futures.²⁵ For the fantasist, life is psychological, and its purpose is to find connection between life and soul.²⁶ This activity is not the foolishly esoteric; rather it is "the activity that makes events esoteric."²⁷

Yet, fantasy as a valid and truthful mode is in peril. It produces a truth of pure forms²⁸ that is antithetical to contemporary, materialistic, empirical, phenomenological, and technological society. Despite its formalized support of the arts, twentieth-century Western society "has consistently been antagonistic to the flowering of the life of fantasy."²⁹ Anyone who has had the misfortune to laud a fantasy work or express a fantasy before one of the all-too-frequently "realistic" audiences knows the crippled snobbery that is summoned. Anyone who has taught fantasy probably will sympathize with Eric S. Rabkin's description of his uninitiated students:

Before they ever enter the classroom, our students "know" the following about fantasy: fantasy is for kids (so it's got to be simple); fantasy is unreal (so life's problems won't bother us here); and fantasy is popular (so we don't need to learn anything form the teacher).³⁰

Sadly, even though "fantasy is a self-justifying biological function," it is brought into question, on the grounds of usefulness, only by those who mistakenly believe in the absolute existence of a "concrete reality." In its appropriate frame, its autonomy from everyday makes it the final "refuge of dignity," and the charge that fantasy is "escape" only reinforces the need for the ability to disengage the mind from the mundane.

Yet, today the right to fantasy is clearly being challenged by philosophies and orientations that would prefer security to advancement, technology to invention, and acceptance to thought. Numerous warning shave been sounded against the empirical stance. Harvey Cox, in *The Feast of Fools*, dramatically states that "without fantasy a society cuts itself off from the visceral fonts of renewal" and that "the survival of mankind also has been places in jeopardy by the repression of festivity and fantasy." Erich Neumann, in *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*, examines the Judeo-Christian dualism's inability to cope with human nature. He assesses the modern age as follows:

The modern age is an epoch in human history in which science and technology are demonstrating beyond doubt the capacity of the conscious mind to deal with physical nature and to master it to a very great extent—at any rate, to a greater degree than in any earlier period in human history. But it is also an epoch in which man's incapacity to deal with psychic nature, with the human soul, has become more appallingly obvious than ever before.³⁵

Ursula K. Le Guin, the noted science-fiction and fantasy writer, may be correct when she says that Americans fear fantasy because it is too true and threatens "all that is false, . . . phony, unnecessary and trivial in the life they [adults] have let themselves be forced into living. They are afraid of dragons, because they are afraid of freedom." It would be interesting to see what the American public would do if it were stripped of its condominiums and Cadillacs and had to rely on some non-economic system of immaterial values as a measure of success. Or if there were a general understanding that history demonstrates that wealth is a very poor method of seeking immortality. Certainly material wealth generates security, but at a high price, for it does severely limit psychological freedom and growth. Security and stability attempt to negate change and produce

a static, rather than a dynamic, society. The signs of such general stagnation are clear. Secularization, socialization, and nominalism have reduced the invigorating rebirth of the mythic experience and the liberating mind-play of festivity and games to socially acceptable and "inferior" portions of the "superior" utilitarian world. Art is subordinated to "real" waking experience.³⁷ Ideas, visions, truths, and rigorous concepts have been reduced to ideologies and fads, which depend more on slogans and ephemeral appeal than important, articulated systems.³⁸ Everywhere, marketing glorifies the consumable and caters to the uneducated and superficial. This is no surprise: mass participation requires a collective with as few distinctive qualities as possible, one that does as little by itself as possible. The creative individual, the mind that accepts fantasy as a viable and major portion of life, simply does not conform to the collective; he or she leads it:

... the archetypal canon is always created and brought to birth by "eccentric" individuals. These are the founders of religions, sects, philosophies, political sciences, ideologies, and spiritual movements, in the security of which the collective man lives without needing to come into contact with the primordial fire of direct revelation, or to experience the throes of creation.³⁹

It is one of the functions of society, by definition, to foster uniformity of behavior and thought, and this is the major reason why society and culture are inherently antagonistic, Socialized religion, for example, is not prepared to accept any new prophets, and the established faiths will rise wrathfully and righteously against any "new" systems of belief. Closed systems of religion "have an undoubted tendency to suppress the unconscious in the individual as much as possible, thus paralyzing his fantasy activity."40 This is because the original fantasy creations of religions have been placed in the category of inviolate fact and have been socialized into the realm of empirical data. Thus, every-Christian has no fantasies; other people have fantasies. Every-Christian's world is rigidly ruled by externals he or she has been taught to accept as actuality. This is why fantasy is inaccessible to socialized Christian writers. They cannot achieve the Keatsian "negative capability" necessary to respond to and empathize with fantasy's often amoral, asocial, and mysterious qualities, especially in its pagan, heroic form. 41 The few exceptions to this-authors like Charles Williams, C.S. Lewis, and James Blish-clearly are able to write Christian fantasies because their understandings return to religion in its mythic essence rather than in its social form.

Such reliance on the seemingly actual and on rational empiricism creates a hierarchy of values that considers the intellect and science supreme and that, like all established systems, is self-protective and self-perpetuating:

The intellect remains imprisoned in itself just so long as it does not willingly sacrifice its supremacy by recognizing the value of other aims. It shrinks from the step which takes it out of itself and which denies its universal validity, since from the standpoint of the intellect everything else is *nothing but fantasy*. But what great thing ever came into existence that was not first fantasy? Inasmuch as the intellect rigidly adheres to the absolute aim of science it cuts itself off form the springs of life. For it [the intellect] fantasy is nothing but a wish dream, and herein is expressed all that depreciation of fantasy which for science is so welcome and so necessary.⁴²

Most of all, fantasy threatens personal and social complacency through its apparently uncontrollable quality. It is "an irrational, instinctive function", that—like its child, art—leads humanity away from reason to intuition and graphically illuminates all that is shallow, superficial, and conventional in rational or scientific truth. This can be a disquieting and world-shaking experience. James Hillman, the contemporary humanistic psychologist, expresses this at length:

Fantasies are incompatible with my usual ego, and because they are uncontrollable and "fantastic"—that is, away from the relation to ego reality—we feel them alien. We are not embarrassed in the same way by our will and intelligence; indeed, we proudly exhibit their accomplishments. But what breeds in the imagination we tend to keep apart and to ourselves. Imagination is an inner world-not spatially inside, but kept in, esoteric, the inner aspect of consciousness. These affections and fantasies are the imaginal or unconscious aspect of everything we think and do. This part of soul that we keep to ourselves is central to analysis, to confession, to prayer, central between lovers and friends, central in the work of are, central to what we mean by "telling the truth," and central to our fate. What we hold close in our imaginal world are [sic] not just images and ideas but living bits of soul; when they are spoken, a bit of soul is carried with them. When we tell our takes, we give away our souls. The shame we feel is less about the content of the fantasy that it is that there is fantasy at all, because the revelation of the imagination is the revelation of the

uncontrollable, spontaneous spirit, an immortal, divine part of the soul, the *memoria Dei*. Thus the shame we feel refers to a sacrilege: the revelation of fantasies exposes the divine, which implies that *our fantasies are alien because they are not ours*. They arise from the transpersonal background, from nature or spirit or the divine, even as they become personalized through our lives, moving our personalities into mythic enactments.⁴⁵

Fantasy, line creative mythology, "springs not, like theology, from the dicta of authority, but form the insights, sentiments, thought, and vision of an adequate individual, loyal to her or his own experience of value." It is unfortunate that this loyalty to, and dignity of, self is so distasteful to the modern mind, for fantasy does represent an effort to make sense of areas of experience that "have not been lived through directly to any great extent."

This vicarious experience is, of course, the key to art, and fantasy the prime progenitor of art, just as fantasy is the inner world of the artist, and artistic manifestation is the outer symbol of fantasy's inner activity. As a symbol, art is not simply a nominalistic representation. Art is, rather, the symbol that "must be understood in an immanent—not in a transcendent sense." It represents a mode of thought that "takes an inside event and puts it outside, at the same time making this content alive, personal, and even divine." Creative fantasy produces symbols of actuality—fantasms that are *idée-forces* and represent the sum of the libido, that "touch and exhilarate centers of life beyond the vocabularies of reason and coercion," and that are products of a mode that recognizes that all realities are "primarily symbolic or metaphorical." Within this mode, the role of the creative artist and fantasist is well described by Joseph Campbell in *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology*:

Creative artist . . . are mankind's wakeners to recollection: summoners of our outward mind to conscious contact with ourselves, not as participants in this or that morsel of history, but as spirit, in the consciousness of being. Their task, therefore, is to communicate directly from one inward world to another, in such a way that an actual shock of experience will have been rendered: not a mere statement for the information or persuasion of a brain, but an effective communication across the void of space and time from one center of consciousness to another. ⁵³

Fantasy, then, occupies a very elemental place in literary art and art in general. It is, however, incorrect to identify it as a literary genre. Such an edict is

far too constrictive. While a number of recent critics have supported the view that fantasy must not be seen as a genre, most notably Eric S. Rabkin in *The Fantastic in Literature*⁵⁴ and W.R. Irwin in *The Game of the Impossible*, ⁵⁵ the initial and definitive statement of fantasy's pervasive quality belongs to E.M. Forster:

There is more the novel than time or people or logic or any of their derivatives, more even than fate. And by "more" I do not mean something that excludes these aspects nor something that cuts across them like a bar of light, that is intimately connected with them at one place and patiently illumines all the problems, and at another place shoots over or through them as if they did not exist. We shall give that bar of light two names, fantasy and prophecy. 56

While fantasy can occur as an element in any literary work, regardless of genre, the literature that can be identified as fantasy is that corpus in which the impossible is primary in its quantity or centrality. A fantasy work must present "the persuasive establishment and development of an impossibility, an arbitrary construct of the mind "57 Within these limits, fantasy literature, the "clearest expression of the specific activity of psyche,"58 is what could never have been, cannot be, and can never be within the actual, social, cultural, and intellectual milieu of its creation. The impossibilities of fantasy must be recognized within their social, cultural, and historical context, or there is the danger of turning fantasy literature into a panacea, offering perspectives on, and solutions to, whatever the twentieth-century mind finds unbelievable, regardless of its origins. The creation of fantasy in literature is non-accidental; fantasy does demand an intellectual rejection of the experiential, external world.⁵⁹ The criteria for fantasy are not dependent on the sophistication of the individual reader, but on the sophistication of "the culture which a work of art simultaneously reflects and is received by "60 If this context were avoided, a modern reader would view the unicorns, dragons, basilisks, and other creatures included in the classical and medieval encyclopedias and bestiaries as products of fantasy rather than as examples of the periods' perceived natural histories. Thus, one of the essential characteristics of fantasy literature is that "it contradicts our experience, not the limited experience we can attain as individuals, but the totality of our knowledge of what our culture regards as real."61

Obviously, such a movement away from the experiential world makes a special demand. As an asocial and non-causal mode, fantasy literature compels its readers to make an adjustment that is required by all art:

For art arises from other and deeper sources [than logical ones]. In order to discover these sources we must first

forget our common standards, we must plunge into the mysteries of our unconscious life.⁶²

However, the appreciation and apprehension of fantasy require an additional adjustment beyond that of art.⁶³ This necessary and *apriori* departure from the actual world of data and measurable phenomena has been variously labeled. Samuel Coleridge called it "the willing suspension of disbelief," a term adopted by T.S. Eliot and one which has gained wide acceptance; J.R.R. Tolkien named it the "literary belief: in "sub-creation"; ⁶⁴ E.M. Forster, "acceptance"; ⁶⁵ Tzvetan Todorov, rational "uncertainty" or "hesitation"; ⁶⁶ and W.R. Irwin, "credence." All of these labels or tags point to a rigorous detachment from the ordinary and to a union with fiction, which Harvey Cox amplifies by saying that "In fantasy, our physical body is left behind and an imaginary body, often differing markedly form the physical one, takes over." Through this shift, fantasy as literature demands that its readers enter into a "complex and dynamic relationship" in which creative inner realities are paradoxically made manifest and the internal is externalized and made visible through art as symbol. In this effort "to make non-fact appear as fact," the "writer and reader knowingly enter upon a conspiracy of intellectual subversiveness...."

The immediate result of the game of "non-fact" that the reader and writer engage in is the evocation of wonder. This wonder may range

from crude astonishment at the marvelous, to a sense of "meaning-in-the-mysterious" or even the numinous. Wonder is of course generated by fantasy purely from the presence of the supernatural or impossible, and from the element of mystery and lack of explanation that goes with it.⁷²

This is a wonder generated by the admiration for the human mind, and fantasy is the animate symbol of the mind's creative function. This is why fantasy literature is distinct from horror literature. Horror inspires "numinous rage" and fear because it maims and distorts creation. Fantasy celebrates creation, and, like romance,

... turns fear at a distance, or terror, into the adventurous; fear at contact, or horror, into the marvelous, and fear without object, or dread (*Angst*), into a pensive melancholy. It turns pity at distance, or concern, into the theme of chivalrous rescue; pity at contact, or tenderness, into a languid and relaxed charm, and pity without an object (which has no name but is a kind of animism, or treating everything in nature as though it had human feelings) into creative fantasy.⁷⁴

Often, this wonder is produced through the devices of the supernatural, the numinous, and the mysterious. Paradoxically, fantasy does this in its capacity as a bridge spanning the gap between the known and the unknown. And it is this giving of concrete form to the unknown that gives fantasy a portion of its delightful appeal and its verisimilitude. For while a literature like science fiction always runs the risk of its science and technology becoming obsolete, magic never grows old and acquires "a unique place in a [positivistic] world from which all supernatural forces are excluded." Moreover, the movement away from the actual, be it through the supernatural or through other means, which makes a fantasy elemental rather than moral, frequently gives it the form of the mythic psychomachia and allows fantasy to confront the non-effectible and to transcend mundane limitations and causality.

As a result, the fictive setting that fantasy creates "is more than a backdrop; it is integral to the events themselves, a kind of spiritual landscape in which even the least element might carry a moral meaning." This event-oriented, temporarily non-causal fantasy realm, along with fantasy's often picaresque and estranged characters, fantasy shares with its intimate mate, myth:

The world of myth is a dramatic world--a world of actions, of forces of conflicting powers. In every phenomenon of nature it sees the collision of these powers. Mythical perception is always impregnated with these emotional qualities. Whatever is seen or felt is surrounded by a special atmosphere--an atmosphere of joy or grief, of anguish, of excitement, of exultation or depression. Here we cannot speak of "things" as a dead or indifferent stuff. All objects are benign or malignant, friendly or inimical, familiar or uncanny, alluring and fascinating or repellent and threatening. We can easily reconstruct this elementary form of human experience, for even in the life of the civilized man it has by no means lost its original power.⁷⁷

As extreme in their departure from the actual as the worlds of fantasy may seem in their mythopoetic magnitude, they are not a full denial of, or departure from, the "normal," work-a-day world. Dependent on the empirical and causal expectations of the actual world for its impossibilities, fantasy is also bound by semantics and perspective. A complete fantasy world can no more exist than a purely empirical one could. "Even the wildest and most wanton fantasy" is governed by "inflexible universal laws." In addition, fantasy creation is not quite the one-hundred-and-eighty-degree reversal from the ground rules of everyday, which Eric S. Rabkin depicts. ⁷⁹ Fantasy's laws, even though they are impulsive

rather than factual, are often more internally consistent, "conventionalized," rigorous, and ethical than those of the mundane world, especially when fantasy is allied with the epic and produces heroic or sword & sorcery fantasy. Fantasy must be this way. Without an internally lawful system, it would have no credibility, the willing suspension of disbelief notwithstanding. The lack of internal order would disrupt the intellectual game of the new set of "continuous and coherent" facts that the reader has "willfully and speculatively accepted, against the established facts, which he only pretends to reject." Such lawlessness would destroy the mental play that allows the reader to accept the new world of the fantasy. Thus, just as the involvement in the release of festivity and holiday operates by the lawful reversal of everyday, so too fantasy literature conforms to its own strictures, and the resultant liberation from actuality generates purposeful and joyful play, allowing the reader's mind to seek and explore its own capacities for appreciation.

Fantasy literature, through its rejection of the mundane world, its wonder, and its coherent and liberating new worlds, creates a fantastic duality for the reader. Quality fantasy "may by virtue of the strength and skill with which it is created make us feel simultaneously that it does and does not have reality." The reader is aware that he or she still exists in the world of accepted actuality but, at the same time, ventures into another, impossible place. Within this duality, the reader's mind is free to play upon both the actual and fictive experiences. And while it is not necessary for the existence of the fantasy experience, the fantasy writer "may really hope that his story will have some lasting effect of modifying the way in which his readers accept the norm that he has playfully violated." Robert Scholes calls this possible cognitive return "fabulation" and defines it as "fiction that offers us a world clearly and radically discontinuous from the one we know, yet returns to confront that known world in some cognitive way."

Beside the great pleasure that fantasy literature bestows upon its reader, this cognitive reflection is its most utilitarian benefit. In the conflict between creation and social, religious, and cultural restrictions, fantasy as thought and art maintains humanity's sense of itself and its capacities, denying the separation from self that must result from purely external determinants of behavior and thought. As C.G. Jung vividly explains:

It [fantasy] is, pre-eminently, the creative activity from which the answers to all answerable questions come; it is the mother of all possibilities, where, like all psychological opposites, the inner and outer worlds are joined together in living union. Fantasy it was and ever is which fashions the bridge between the irreconcilable claims of subject and object, introversion and

introversion. In fantasy alone both mechanisms are united. 87

Within the state of enchantment and wonder it creates through its embodiment of psychic unity, fantasy ignores the inconsequential distraction of the immediate and embraces the elemental and the whimsical, rejects the social and the moralistic, and confronts the essential and universal potentialities of art and mind. Since its reality is formed in the mind but bound to the external world, fantasy confronts, materializes, and unifies the paradoxical, the ambiguous, and the non-effectible common to the human condition. As it transcends mundane limitations, it becomes more and more irreducible, frequently promoting growth and enhancing existence, forming an interface with basic historical and human realities.

What would the world be like without fantasy? Since it is such a basic element of humanity, such a question is as difficult to entertain as the reality of our own inevitable deaths. However, J.B. Priestley, in his short story "The Grey Ones," comes very close to stating the consequences of such a world. One character, Mr. Patson, has become aware of a conspiracy by the "Evil Principle" and its minions, the "grey ones," to gain control of mankind. Not knowing that he is talking to one of the grey ones, Priestley's character captures the nature of a world without fantasy:

"The main object, I gathered from what Firbright said," Mr. Patson replied earnestly, "is to make mankind go the way the social insects went, to turn us into automatic creatures, mass beings without individuality, soulless machines of flesh and blood."

The Doctor seemed amused, "And why should the Evil Principle want to do that?"

"To destroy the soul of humanity," said Mr. Patson, without an answering smile. "To eliminate certain states of mind that belong essentially to the Good. To wipe from the face of this earth all wonder, joy, deep feeling, the desire to create, to praise life." 88

NOTES

¹Harvey Cox, *The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1969), p. 11.

²Erich Neumann, *Depth Psychology and a New Ethic*, trans. Eugene Rolfe (1949; rpt New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 107.

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⁵C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed., trans. R.F.C. Hull, The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Vol. 9, pt. I (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968), p. 155.

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⁸C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, trans. H.G. Baynes, rev. R.F.C. Hull, The Collected Works of C.G. Jung, Vol. 6 (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971), p. 433.

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¹⁰J.R.R. Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories," in *Essays Presented to Charles Williams*, ed. C.S. Lewis (London: Oxford UP, 1947); rev. ed. in *The Tolkien*

Reader (New York: Ballantine, 1966), p. 47 [74].

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¹⁹Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology* (1968; rpt. New York: Penguin, 1976), p. 649.

²⁰Ibid., p.6.

²¹Ibid., pp. 6, 609.

²²Ibid., p. 4.

²³Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, pp. 66-67; Jung, *Psychological Types*, p. 52.

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²⁸Ernst Cassirer, An Essay on Man: An Introduction to a Philosophy of Human Culture (1944; rpt. New Haven: Yale UP, 1962), p. 164.

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³⁶Ursula K. Le Guin, "Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" *P[ACIFIC] N[ORTHWEST] L[IBRARY] A[SSOCIATION] QUARTERLY* Winter 1974, p. 18.

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⁴⁹Hillman, *Re-Visioning Psychology*, p. 12; Neumann, *The Origins and History of the Consciousness*, p. 369.

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⁶⁴Tolkien, pp. 36-37 [63-64].

⁶⁵Forster, p. 75.

⁶⁶Tzveton Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, trans. Richard Howard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1975), pp. 25, 31.

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⁸⁰Northrop Frye, *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romane* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1976), p. 36.

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- ⁸³Cassirer, p. 164.
- ⁸⁴Manlove, p. 2.
- ⁸⁵Irwin, p. 183.

⁸⁶Robert Scholes, *Structural Fabulation: An Essay on Fiction of the Future*, University of Notre Dame Ward-Phillips Lectures in English Language and Literature, Vol. 7 (Notre Dame and London: U of Notre Dame P, 1975), p. 29.

⁸⁷Jung, *Psychological Types*, p. 52.

⁸⁸J.B. Priestley, "The Grey Ones," in *The Other Place and Other Stories of the Same Sort* (Melbourne, London, and Toronto: William Heinemann, 1953); rpt. in *The Unknown*, ed. Marvin Allen Karp (New York: Popular Library, 1965), p. 26.

IN THE LOOKING GLASSES: THE POPULAR AND CULTURAL FANTASY RESPONSE¹

The fantasy response has often been labeled escape, frequently with negative connotations. In many sectors it is left thus defined with a degree of smugness: patted on the head and left to idle play. To leave this reaction to fantasy in a confused and superficial limbo is a crime that anyone familiar with fantasy will quickly challenge. Indeed, this escape – or more properly, reversal – is too complicated and involved to be relegated to a popular panacea. In both its popular and cultural manifestations, fantasy's escape is not a state of being, obvious in its mere existence. Rather, it is a process, a movement from one state to another, a seduction unique to all varieties of experience that transform mundane life.

C.S. Lewis, in *An Experiment in Criticism*, makes a similar observation about the "stigma of 'escapism'":

Now there is a clear sense in which all reading whatever is an escape. It involves a temporary transference of the mind from our actual surroundings to things merely imagined or conceived. This happens when we read history or science no less than when we read fictions. All such escape is *from* the same thing; immediate, concrete actuality. The important question is what we escape *to*.²

This escape from or reversal of one epistemological system to another varies markedly in its distinct social and cultural contexts. In its many variations and permutations, it can be the movements back and forth from empirical to theoretical, from objective to subjective, from religious to scientific, and from ritualistic to mythic until it seems to reflect the mirrors within mirrors in the barber shop in its departures and returns.

Whatever the escape or reversal, too many scholars to mention agree that the fantasy experience is a departure from the "everyday." Needless-to-say, the nature and character of "everyday" is one of the most critical factors in determining the character of the fantasy experience.

Prior to any fantasy experience – whether it be from a social or a cultural base – a particular state of mind must exist. This mental predisposition has been tagged by various terms: Samuel Coleridge called it "the willing suspension of disbelief" in the *Biographia Literaria*, a term that was adopted by T.S. Eliot and one that has gained wide acceptance. J.R.R. Tolkien labeled it more simply as "literary belief" in "sub-creation" (viz. the physical manifestation of the mind's creation). E.M. Forster called it "acceptance"; Tzvetan Todorov, rational "uncertainty" or "hesitation"; and W.R. Irwin, "credence." Regardless of the

nomenclature, all of these labels identify a detachment from accepted causal expectations, which Harvey Cox amplifies, in *The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy*, by saying that "In fantasy, our physical body is left behind and an imaginary body, often differing markedly from the physical one, takes over." While Cox's application of astral projection may omit writers and artists who use the normal world as a predominant setting, such as Peter S. Beagle or Michael Hague, his description is clearly appropriate when dealing with artists who create more totally fantastic settings.

This *apriori* willingness to yield to the fantasy experience is further distinguished by W.R. Irwin, in *The Game of the Impossible*, as an effort "to make non-fact appear as fact," in which the "writer and reader knowingly enter upon a conspiracy of intellectual subversiveness." In attempting to distinguish between social fantasy and cultural fantasy, Irwin's observation that the reader and writer knowingly engage in a conspiracy is a critical one. It assumes that knowledge of the distinctions between fact and non-fact is a key factor in apprehending fantasy and that the decision to void the distinctions is reached through understanding. The fantasy experience without the knowledge and ability to differentiate epistemological systems is dream or delusion, which allows all sorts of strange things to wander abroad under the mantle of the wondrous.

Such confusion is characteristic of popular, social apprehension of fantasy, and those who know fantasy well might well be disturbed by certain odd happenings. Anne McCaffrey's The White Dragon, a science-fiction novel utilizing mutated dragons and space travel, recently won the 1979 Gandalf Award for Best Book-Length Work of Fantasy at the World Science Fiction Conference in England, defeating such obvious fantasy works as Roger Zelazny's *The Courts of* Chaos and Katherine Kurtz's Saint Camber. Oddly, The White Dragon also finished second in the balloting for the Hugo Award for the best science-fiction novel at the same conference. Equally strange are the frequent nominations of horror fiction for World Fantasy Awards. It would appear that the distinction between fantasy's evocation of wonder and affirmation of life and horror's evocation of fear and maining of life is not an important one within fandom. Within this frame, it should be no surprise that many of my freshman students viewed the Holocaust within the context of Dracula and Frankenstein. For them, the Holocaust was fantasy. Indeed, even magic, long one of the safer criterion for fantasy, is now in peril. A series of articles in the October, 1979, issues of the Gary, Indiana, Post Tribune chronicled the dismissal of a number of civil service employees for practicing witchcraft and maintaining a witches' coven in one of the welfare offices. In addition, the continuing confusion between science fiction's scientific or pseudoscientific extrapolations and fantasy's empirically-impossible, if psychologically valid, projections is frequent and frustrating, In 1978, for

example, the normally perceptive science-fiction and fantasy writer Robert Silverberg edited an anthology, entitled *Lost Worlds, Unknown Horizons: Nine Stories of Science Fiction* [my stress] (Thomas Nelson), that contained nothing but well-known and obvious fantasy stories, such as Fritz Leiber's Fafhrd and the Gray Mouser tale, "The Sunken Land." For the perceptive reader, such confusion can be as aggravating as the hawking of Robert E. Howard's historical and mainstream fiction under the rubric of his successful fantasy by opportunistic publishers.

Perhaps some of this confusion may be attributed to failures in the public school systems; some may be the result of the confusion between fact and illusion that television so successfully fosters. Whatever the factors, it is clear that the ability to recognize and understand fantasy is a rare one in society. This social misapprehension also presents a danger to the scholar or teacher who, in dealing with a literature as popular as fantasy, fails to distinguish between the nature of the literature and the nature of the social response to it. This confusion is a very real threat. Herbert Fingarette, in The Self in Transformation: Psychoanalysis, Philosophy, and the Life of the Spirit, has pointed out that twentieth-century Western society "has consistently been antagonistic to the flowering of the life of fantasy." One of the major contributing causes of this unwillingness to apprehend true, cultural fantasy is the deification of the intellect, a much stressed characteristic in the last two centuries, since, according to C.G. Jung in Psychological Types, the intellect considers everything except itself fantasy.8 A more compelling factor is the rise of which can be called the "Cult of Unintelligible Science and Technology." This group, its members suffering from future shock and the geometric increase in empirical knowledge and application, worships the mysterious hardware of the world, considering them as enigmatic as John Brunner's Traveler in Black.

Another major contributing factor to the inability to apprehend fantasy must also be the social preoccupation with religion, especially in the recent resurgence of its pentecostal forms. Socialized religion, as distinct from mythical religion as it is used by such authors as C.S. Lewis, Charles Williams, and James Blish, is a closed system of belief metamorphosed into a system of fact that will rise wrathfully and righteously against any contrary epistemology or anything that would even remotely threaten its absolute validity. Any who doubt this characteristic need look no further than to the furor surrounding Monty Python's Life of Brian, which recently reached a nadir with the film's banning as obscene in Valdosta, Georgia. Indeed, the teaching of the Christian myth of creation alongside evolution in public school science classes is another illustration of the influence of those who are unable to distinguish scientific theory from irrational belief. One can only wonder what the reaction will be when Charles Sailor's recent novel, The Second Son (Avon, 1979), appears as an MGM motion picture

or what has been the reaction when various unsuspecting Blackfoot and Christian members of the Book-of-the-Month Club opened Eric Rabkin's anthology, without having read the introduction, and discovered their creation myths in a book entitled *Fantastic Worlds*. As D.G. Jung observes in the previously mentioned *Psychological Types*, closed systems of religion "have an undoubted tendency to suppress the unconscious in the individual as much as possible, thus paralyzing his creative activity." The result of this is that all social fantasy – as it exists in art, literature, and behavior – is determined by a series of learned, non-creative, and imitative reflections of existence rooted in the inability to distinguish between fact and belief, whim and reason, opinion and authority, and, most significantly, the ephemeral present and the enduring tradition.

Socialized fantasy is a particularly unfortunate set of circumstances in contrast to the quality of cultural and artistic fantasy. Various warnings against philosophies and orientations that allow social illusion to be construed as fantasy have come from varied sources. All of these warnings point to the value of fantasy in its cultural form and bemoan the fact that society, attempting to force all experience into the realm of the intellect, loses a fare greater prize. Harvey Cox, in the aforementioned *The Feast of Fools*, dramatically states that "without fantasy a society cuts itself off from the visceral fonts of renewal" and that "the survival of mankind also has been placed in jeopardy by the repression of festivity and fantasy." Erich Neumann, in Depth Psychology and a New Ethic, warns that, despite humanity's obvious ability to manipulate the natural environment as never before, "man's incapacity to deal with psychic nature, with the human soul, has become more appallingly obvious than ever before." Ursula K. Le Guin, in an essay entitled "Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" in The Pacific Northwest Library Association Quarterly, is probably correct when she observes that Americans fear fantasy because it is too true and threatens "all that is false. . . . phony, unnecessary and trivial in the life they [American adults] have let themselves be forced into living. They are afraid of dragons, because they are afraid of freedom."12

Clearly, Cox, Neumann, and Le Guin are not discussing social fantasy when they offer their warnings and communicate their fears. Rather, they are directing their attention to the cultural and artistic fantasy that is the basis for imagination, and that is the projection of the skilled, creative mind. In fact, they are only partially occupying themselves with fantasy as it manifests in itself in literature and art. Instead, they are confronting humanity's most distinctive quality: the power to create *ex nihilo*, "out of nothing." This ability, based strongly on the power to depart knowledgeably from the normative world, is what unifies the inner self with the outer environment, and is what dynamically joins the ego and the

unconscious through what the psychologists call "primary process." Sadly, social fantasy destroys this wholeness.

To be successful, to progress, to evolve, homo sapiens has had to build its world upon this inner capacity and has had to give it external reality. Besieged by externals and simultaneously shaping these externals with the mind, primitive men and women had to become creators to survive. In the eons that have passed since the first burgeonings of awareness, humankind has indeed distinguished itself as what Harvey Cox calls "homo fantasia, the visionary dreamer and myth-maker." 13 Within this inventive capacity, humanity has populated the cosmos with spirits and demons, religions an philosophies, social orders and political systems, rituals and myths, laws and mores, boundaries and belongings, hopes and expectations important because they were initially conceived in the mind. Erich Neumann, again in Depth Psychology and a New Ethic, describes this activity: "This influence of the inner world is to be found at work in such diverse spheres as politics and religion, technology and art. War and destruction are repeatedly let loose to devastate the world at the behest of men driven by fantasies of power; at the same time, the inner images of creative artists become the cultural possession of the whole human race."14

If we accept the premises of C.G. Jung, the inner activity of fantasy is humanity's link to the mythic past through archetypes and the collective unconscious, and according to Jung in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, archetypes and creative fantasy work together to produce myth, art, and religion. George MacDonald appears to agree when he observes that fantasy gives "form to thought," and Jung amplifies this when he asserts that fantasy is what supplies the will with content. Psychological and artistic fantasy, by entertaining the impossible, brings the human mind into a confrontation with its own potentialities and, by ignoring social stricture and expectation, brings into existence the inner realities of the mind through primary process. For the artists who seek and find this wellspring of creation, the fellowship they join is fulfilling, but not very socially satisfying, for, as Erich Neumann observes in *The Origins and History of the Consciousness*,

... the archetypal canon is always created and brought to birth by "eccentric" individuals. These are the founders of religions, sects, philosophies, political sciences, ideologies, and spiritual movements, in the security of which the collective man lives without needing to come into contact with the primordial fire of direct revelation, or to experience the throes of creation.¹⁸

For the individual who can develop the ability to create cultural fantasy, the rewards are great. It is questionable whether any other quality of art has the

persuasive and pervasive impact of mythic fantasy, whether any other can affect what Joseph Campbell calls "the centers of life beyond vocabularies of reason and coercion" in *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology* and can establish a communication from one inner being to another across time and space.¹⁹

For the artist and perceiver of fantasy who is unfettered by social confusion, there is a vitally important escape available. They can remove themselves to the realms of rigorous and creatively lawful play and festivity and leave behind the oppressive facts of authority to indulge in the pleasures of pure and willful creation. In impossible climes and contradictions of day-to-day causality, fantasy art provides them with the opportunity to make the impossible possible, to make wish manifest. The doors to the vicarious sharing of art are opened as far as they can be, and nominalism is denied through immanent, rather than representative, symbols and metaphors. Artistic fantasy's wonder delivers the Keatsian "negative capability" and prevents the participants from making themselves prisoners of the empirical and social worlds.

It is only fitting that this exploration of the juxtaposition of social and artistic fantasy conclude with a quotation from C.G. Jung, whose influence here has been strong and who has been one of fantasy's greatest advocates:

It [fantasy] is, pre-eminently, the creative activity from which the answers to all answerable questions come; it is the mother of all possibilities, where, like all psychological opposites, the inner and outer worlds are joined together in living union. Fantasy it was and ever is which fashions the bridge between the irreconcilable claims of subject and object, introversion and extroversion. In fantasy alone both mechanisms are united.²⁰

NOTES

¹Portions of this essay have previously appeared in the introduction to the author's *The Literature of Fantasy: A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography of Modern Fantasy Fiction* (New York and London: Garland, 1979).

²C.S. Lewis, "On Realisms," in *An Experiment in Criticism* (Cambridge:

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³For a particularly perceptive examination of this transition, see Harvey Cox's *The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1969).

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¹²Ursula K. Le Guin, "Why Are Americans Afraid of Dragons?" *P[acific]*

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¹⁷Jung, *Psychological Types*, p. 115.

¹⁸Erich Neumann, The Origins and History of the Consciousness, trans.

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¹⁹Joseph Campbell, *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology* (1968; rpt. New York: Penguin, 1976), pp. 4, 92-93.

²⁰Jung. *Psychological Types*, p. 52.

IN SEARCH OF CREATIVE SOLITUDE IN MODERN FANTASY: AN ESSAY ON THE FASCINATION WITH EVIL

Among the greatest and most laudable of humanity's activities and patterns is creative solitude. Buddha reached the culmination of his contemplation of human existence while sitting beneath a tree beside the Nairanjana River. Jesus returned with his message of salvation only after struggling with the Satan's temptations in the wilderness. Each Ramadan, Mahomet withdrew from the world to the cave of Hera, and St. Catherine of Siena secluded herself for three years to experience a series of mystic visions (Storr 34). The goal of high magic – be it religiously approved or not – has always been to escape the world and expand the consciousness and the imagination (Cavendish 19). The powerful Western European mystical tradition has insisted that enlightenment and creation are tied to solitude (Underhill 169-70), and the Chinese *Sennin* lives in the heart of a mountain to refine his awesome powers of wisdom and magic (Akutagawa 13n).

However, as compelling as creative solitude is, it is neither important nor pervasive in modern British and American fantasy. Generally, it is avoided or punished. This is because most fantasy narrative seeks the restoration of a perfect creation, one that has been distorted or maimed by the innovative forces of evil. It is a conservative mode, one that avidly pursues the renovation of cosmic or social order. (This is what J. R. R. Tolkien called "consolation" – the joy of the happy ending ["On" 68]). The heroes of fantasy gather into fellowships to re-establish, not create. In their reactions to fixed order, the characters often instinctually know how to respond to and rectify self-evident truths. Their motivations come from outside themselves rather than from within. They are not required to act as individuals but to socialize. Their wills are subservient to an unquestioned, apriori gestalt or collective consciousness that defies what is good and right. Thus, a character's value is often measured in the knowledge of "what should be" rather than of "what could be." Most actions are only healing responses to foul diseases rather than to any senses of preventative anticipation or creative action.

Occasionally, there are rare instances of fantasy protagonists who seek creative purpose and its attendant and necessary solitude, like John Brunner's Traveler in Black, Roger Zelazny's Francis Sandow and Corwin and Merlin of Amber, and Ursula K. Le Guin's Ged. This is expected. All three authors are well known for their common theme of the artistic struggle to bring order from chaos through individual will. Brunner's traveler identifies this as his singular purpose: "I am he to whom was entrusted the task of bringing order forth from chaos" (17). Yet, it would be stretching matters to think too long on Brunner's enigmatic figure as an example of human action; he doesn't even have a name, just a label. His powers and personality are godlike in their remoteness, his resources are unlimited.

and the ironic justice he dispenses is easily done. While he may suffer with humanity's destructiveness (in "The Wager Lost by Winning," for example [99]) and "... laugh at [its] foolishness" (10), the order and justice he creates are void of the suffering that would accompany equivalent human endeavor.

Zelazny's Sandow, in *Isle of the Dead*, and Corwin and Merlin, in the Amber series, are also creative and isolated figures. Sandow is a practitioner of the alien, Pei'an art of worldscaping, the ancient craft of world creation. As such, he appears to be a good possibility in the search for creative isolation. However, his art is no more and no less than the fascinating backdrop for a tale of revenge and power (Yoke 92-93). Corwin and Merlin are better candidates. Both must walk the genetically linking patterns of Amber's realms of order and chaos. This initiation into art, order, and creation (Yoke 80-81, 86) is, indeed, an agonizing process (Yoke 82). As a result, they can not only walk the worlds of "Shadow Earth," but they can create them as well. And, while a case can be made for Machiavellianism as the predominant theme of Zelazny's Amber series, the concept of the eternal cycle of art dragging form from chaos is also extremely important and a good, if rare, example of creative solitude.

Le Guin's Ged, in the first three volumes of the Wizard of Earthsea Tetralogy, is the best example of creative <u>human</u> isolation, and the prices he pays for it are high. In the first volume, *A Wizard of Earthsea*, he is baited and inflamed by his supposed comrades, is psychologically isolated, and falls victim to Faustian pride when he attempts to act independently. It is only through retreat and isolation that he recovers himself and becomes creative enough to learn to chase and embrace his own shadow. In *The Farthest Shore* -- after Ged has seen the mightiest of dragons, Orm Embar, rift of his speech (189); crossed the barrier between life and death to confront Cob the Unmaker (194); and saved his world from chaos -- the tale of his end is veiled in the mystery of retreat from society into solitude (222-23). One can only speculate that Ged returns to his first life model, Ogion.

Brunner's, Zelazny's and Le Guin's protagonists draw resources from within themselves, much as Andre Norton's Simon Tregarth does, and they pay dearly for their independence and their powers of invention by their cruel exiles.

However, the vast preponderance of fantasy's protagonists are not creative in any way nor do they actively seek isolation. Without the company of others, they are lost, miserable, misdirected, and/or tormented. Examples of this are legion. H. Rider Haggard's She, George Sylvester Viereck and Paul Eldridge's Wandering Jew, the alienated Shaman (Schlobin "Pagan"), Michael Moorcock's Elric and Eternal Champion, John Updike's Chiron, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge's Ancient Mariner are only some of the unhappily isolated beings that fill fantasy. It is as if the authors of fantasy mirror those of psychoanalysis. Both write more about the

"fear of being alone or the *wish* to be alone than on the ability to be alone..." (Winnicott 29). Narrative patterns abound with the unavoidable, solitary descents into dark pits of despair (Hillman passim; Frye 239). An obvious example is the harrowing of Hell motif as in Poul Anderson's *Operation Chaos*. Even the pleasant places of safe contemplation, like the luxuriant *locus amoenus*, are closed to fantasy's heroes as they must be out and about correcting evil's machinations (Schlobin "*Locus*").

The twentieth-century's prototypic fantasy, J. R. R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings Trilogy, is a paradigm for the evils of isolation. Frodo mourns leaving the Shire (Fellowship 73) and must return to recreate its original state, just as he has helped return Middle Earth to proper order. Strider is, like his sword, broken and ineffectual until the One Ring is destroyed and the threat to order rendered impotent. In opposition, the characters who seek exile as part of their natures are corrupt and twisted - Sauron, Sauruman, and Gollum - and Boromir's sin is his desire to separate himself from the society of sanctified beings (Fellowship 415-16). By doing so, he breaks the fellowship. All the good characters, especially Bilbo and Frodo, suffer when alone. Disappointingly, the one instance of creative becoming that occurs in the Lord of the Rings is left mysterious and arcane. Gandalf, after his fall with the Balrog (Fellowship 344-5), reappears transformed and remade. Readers are told only that he has passed through torment (Two 105-6) and "fire and deep water" (Two 98) to become Gandalf the White. No one ever knows what miraculous transformations he experienced. Actually, the most creative virtuous character in the Lord of the Rings is the toothsome Samwise.

Among Tolkien's Inkling colleagues, the attitude toward isolation and restoration is much the same. In C. S. Lewis' That Hideous Strength, the Pendragon gathers help to rid the world of the unnatural inventions of N.I.C.E. Charles Williams' War in Heaven, as most of his fiction, revels in resurrecting the talismans of the past to remedy the present and the future. Lest anyone suggest that references to Tolkien, Lewis, and Williams do little more that echo the Inklings' allegiance to the Judeo-Christian tradition's long marriage to order and the status quo, a few further illustrations indicate otherwise. Stephen Donaldson's Thomas Covenant series, especially White Gold Wielder, speaks forcefully for restoration and commitment to the greater, social good – the "Land." Andre Norton's Witch World series does much the same as Simon Tregarth, his witch wife, and their children battle the unnatural and scientific Kolder. Avram Davidson's The Phoenix and the Mirror would appear to hold greater hope of finding a creative individual who seeks effective isolation. Yet, Davidson's Vergil Magus agonizes throughout the making of the virgin speculum and sees himself as having the """predetermined and exact"" fate (68) of a hunted, isolated stag (71). His creative process and its product give him little, if any, satisfaction. In other

circles, artistic withdrawal and success have been described as agonizingly painful and ultimately exulting by such varied authors as William Butler Yeats (the "Byzantium" poems in particular), St. Augustine, William Blake, and Plato. In fantasy, the pain occurs without the benefits that spring from the legitimate communion with the self.

In short, the vast majority of fantasy's fictional luminaries display wonderful traits and powers: they affirm, discover, reveal, correct, rescue, regenerate, heal, restore, conquer, triumph, and resolve. Yet, all they are doing is reacting to situations made by others and to an irresistible and xenophobic mandate to return to a sacred, Edenic past. They rarely, if ever, withdraw from what great thinkers have seen as the illusions and distractions of the world and seek to create and build anew.

Rather, fantasy's characters rush to their fellowships. They seem to know that solitude, regardless of its benefits, threatens personal safety and the sanctity of relationships. To challenge those relationships and all their accompanying expectations would require a denial of the assumption that they are absolute and "the only path toward fulfilment [sic]" (Storr xii-xiii). Separation, then, exists in fantasy for the value of the herd, not the individual. In fact, independent, creative action appears to be anathema. It is as if Freud's edict that only an unsatisfied person "phantasies" and that "every single phantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of an unsatisfying reality" (9:146) is an unbreakable law. In this, fantasy links very strongly to horror literature. In horror, venturing into the unknown without just cause is always the impetus for vile punishment (Schlobin "Children...," passim). Just as Mary Shelley's Dr. Frankenstein and Gore Vidal's Kelly learn that nature expects conformity, so too readers are assailed further by creation-as-deviance in Katherine Dunn's Geek Love, in which carnival owners use drugs, insecticides, and radioisotopes to bear freaks, and in Clive Barker's The Great and Secret Show, in which a functionary in the dead-letter office becomes godlike and threatens to pollute the archetypal pool of the imagination. In all these cases, failure to recognize an omnipotent order yields the Faustian fall, the crime of the magician who separates himself from the general run of humanity and social order to seek the devil (Cavendish 18). Both fantasy and horror reject the individual will; in the former, it is irrelevant to greater good; in the latter, it is crushed by irresistible evil. In both cases, it has no place. This is because most fantasy is not a home for the self-discovery that comes from being alone (Storr 21); it is the celebration of the adherence to an order greater than the self. The need to belong to a larger community (Storr 13) supersedes all.

Anthony Storr, in his insightful *Solitude: A Return to Self*, offers a helpful key to why fantasy, as well as any conservative genre, shuns invention and seeks restoration. Storr indicates that creative isolation is marked by discontent, a

longing of the soul, and compels the use of the imagination (64). In contrast, the "longing of the soul" in fantasy means seeking and pleasing others and constantly reaffirming a greater good. This is an indication of the retreat from individuation or what Mircea Eliade has described as the refusal to accept separation from the mother (7-10) and what Storr sees as the infantile trait of the clinging that is indicative of insecurity (19). Do fantasy's characters cling? They certainly do, and even when quests and threats force them from the warmth to the cold, their desire to return to the comfort of innocence is a prime motivator. Most of the characters follow creators that existed in some shadowy past. The creators have dealt with the "primordial fire of direct creation" and its "throes," and the characters only stand in the shadows of the greater (Neumann 376). (In this, fantasy conforms to Northrop Frye's definition of romance in which the hero departs from Eden and returns to innocence. This, of course, is Frodo's journey.)

Does this mean that there are no creative characters in fantasy? Hardly. What it does mean, as mentioned earlier, is that there are few virtuous ones. Predominantly, creative solitude is the property of the evil characters. To understand this, Anthony Storr is again helpful: "The creative person is constantly seeking to discover himself, to remodel his own identity, and to find meaning in the universe through what he creates" (xiv). Obviously, fantasy's good and great do not "remodel" anything; their cosmology is fixed and mandated. The opposition, eccentric characters all, is evil because it does seek to shape contrary orders from its own truths. This is not a laudable or admirable quality. Fantasy is dominated by those mythic and mythopoeic forces that desire tranquility. Its characteristic psychomachia occurs to regain balance that has been disturbed by a dark, creative solitude and exists to destroy threats to sanctuary. This is a struggle between ageless and contrary forces: those of socialization, intimacy and companionship, versus those of individuation, independence and separation (Storr xiv).

Readers, of course, are not so much interested in balance as they are with its disruption and the travails involved in righting it. So readers and authors may experience fabulation (Scholes 29) within the fictive experience, but virtuous characters do not. Readers and authors do not seek restoration. That would be boring and passive and would lack tension and drama. Thus, fantasy is dominated by reactionary good, manipulative evil, and boring purity. *Beowulf* contains all these elements: Beowulf, himself, is brought to readers' attention only when he is in conflict, and the tranquility of his comitatus after the initial monsters are slain is ignored; he only resurfaces when the dragon rises. Grendel and kin are fascinating enigmas, spawned from an alien stock, and the admirable Hrothgar is a bland nonentity. This paradigm is repeated over and over again. In James Blish's *Black Easter*, the sorcerer and the industrialist who unleash the hoards of Hell are the most memorable characters. John Brunner's *The Devil's Work* is filled with

intriguing characters, one of whom is not the virtuous victim, Stephen. The civil servant who destroys the sexual-desire machines in Angela Carter's *The Infernal Desire Machines of Dr. Hoffman* (American title: *The War of Dreams*) is a gray wisp beside the novel's darker creations. Further illustrations of the attractiveness of evil versus the blandness of virtue would occasion hours of lists: Lady MacBeth versus Desdemona; Iago versus MacBeth; Vere and Claggart versus Billy Budd; Fagin and Bill Sikes versus Oliver Twist; Modred and Lancelot versus Galahad; Lucifer versus Christ in *Paradise Lost*; Loki and all the tricksters versus the gods; and Archemago, or anyone for that matter, versus the Red Cross Knight in *The Faerie Queene*.

However, to say only that readers have long been riveted by evil and conflict and that fantasy reflects this would be a gross oversimplification. To add that fantasy is still waiting for its own portrait of the virtuous artist is, perhaps, more vapid speculation than it is intelligence. No, on a grander literary scale than just fantasy, the study of creative isolation and its relation to good are major keys to understanding why evil characters are more attractive to readers and authors than their virtuous counterparts are. Most often, it is because it is evil that hides away to pursue the creation and imagination that are humanity's greatest possessions.

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THE CRAVING FOR MEANING: EXPLICIT ALLEGORY IN THE NON-IMPLICIT AGE

But the social order is a sacred right which serves as a foundation for all others. This right however, does not come from nature. It is therefore based on convention -- The question is how to know what these conventions are

Jean-Jacques Rousseau from *The Social Contract* (cited by Holquist 163)

[Meanings] must be groped for, and be tickled too, Or they will not be catch'd, whate'er you do. John Bunyon from *The Pilgrim's Progress*

Over the centuries, many have pronounced allegory and meaning prematurely dead (Honig 5), relegating them to the ash heap of the outmoded. The current post-mortems come from the "personalists" or subjectivists, like Wilhelm Wundt, Karl Vossler, Benedetto Croce, and Edmund Husserl, who say "'I own meaning'" (Holquist 163-4), and the deconstructionists, led by Jacques Derrida, Jacques Lacan, and Michael Foucault, who say that "'No one owns meaning'" (Holquist 164, also cf. Paglia passim).

Certainly, this age is unprecedented in its rending and mistrust of the relationship between signs and signifiers (phonology and semantics). Children, for example, are regularly murdered by street gangs in American cities because they have inadvertently worn the wrong colors or made the wrong hand signals. Lawyers live quite comfortably filling the courts with arguments over explications of the written word. This fragmentation of meanings -- caused by the current multiplicity of divergent cosmologies and the lack of any consensus reality and universal truth available to the Western mind -- would certainly seem to have doomed the implicit, underlying meanings of allegory, as outlined by Dante in his letter to Can Grande and C. S. Lewis in The Allegory of Love (44-111). No longer can audiences view or read such art as Everyman and The Divine Comedy with any common understanding and agreement. Consensus recognition of any union between macrocosm and microcosm is long gone as are the distinctions between real and unreal, material and immaterial. Oddly, and within the popular as well as the intellectual consciousness, this age rejects consensus meaning by fanatically embracing divergent faiths (Schlobin, Literature xxiii-xxiv). Objectivity and Keatsian "negative capability" are no longer even attempted; fragments have become icons, and the concept of unity within civilization has been sacrificed to ethnocentric and self-serving slices of pluralism (cf. Kermode). As Edwin Honig

has observed, allegory and mana mean "nothing if the spectator does not recognize the existence of the object" (23).

In stark contrast to the announced demise of meaning and allegory, fantasy literature is holding fast to both if in a far more explicit way than ever before. A major reason for this is the essential links between fantasy and allegory. Both are conservative, absolutist literatures (especially fantasy in its popular form) that celebrate the triumphs of established social orders -- their characters' goals are almost uniformly to restore the good and the right, which have been disrupted by evil and falsehood (Schlobin, "Pagan" passim.), much in the manner of Northrop Frye's comedic (Anatomy 163-86) or Romantic (Anatomy 186-206) mythos. Allegory and fantasy assume that "... subject matter already stands, in whatever form, as true or factual by common acceptance" (Honig 13). Each persuasively ". .. is the purveyor of demanding truths, and thus its burden is to articulate an epistemological order of truth and deceit . . . " (de Man 2, Honig 10). In both literatures, "The Ideal . . . is the theme of the work" (Honig 13-14), and they concentrate on producing products (Holquist 165) for their own fictive worlds and for their readers. These products are almost universally the return to, at least, the appearance of truth and to sane, calm, and stable times, which is why pivotal, crisis figures in the struggles must leave at tale's end, such as Tolkien's Gandolf and Le Guin's Ged (Schlobin, "Pagan" passim.). Thus, allegory and fantasy's "... deeper purpose and . . . actual effect is to acknowledge the darkness, the arbitrariness, and the void that underlie, and paradoxically make possible, all representations of realms of light, order, and presence" (Greenblatt vii). As such, both embrace paradox and ambiguity, making the material world less real and the immaterial one more so and, of course, inverting normal empirical perception (Honig 53, 70ff.; Schlobin, *Literature* xxvi-xxvii, xxx). One further parallel is that the secondary world is usually far more ethical and valuable, if not more fascist, than the readers' primary ones (Schlobin, *Literature* xxix).

There was a time when such truth worked implicitly, when sign and signifier were much closer than they are now, and obviously, "In a stable system of significance, such an articulation is not problematic . . . " (de Man 2). In the past, ". . . certain recurrent devices serve[d] to dilate or condense meanings . . . " (Honig 4), and authors had a rich hoard of these devices, symbols, signs, myths, and allusions to draw upon to share messages and truths with an economy and terseness of language and meaning. Obviously, that hoard is no longer available. However, allegory and meaning have been nothing if not adaptive. As ideals have changed, they have changed (Honig 30). None-the-less, what are contemporary authors to do when no new ideals rise or when those that do are so numerous and cacophonous that there is no consensus?

One option is simply not to pursue meaning or truth in art at all, which it seems most postmodernists would like. Obviously, this has not happened. Popular fantasy has always been insistently filled with both. Readers still crave meaning despite the lack of commonalty. Students and readers of Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, for example, cried out for an allegory of World War II despite his proclamations to the contrary. In large part, the creation of his own system of meanings and mythology in *The Silmarillion* (1977) either responded to or satisfied this yearning for meaning.

So a second option has been selected. If *a priori* meaning does not implicitly exist, then, meaning must be supplied explicitly through rhetorical techniques and devices and intellectual play. In this, a new twist is added to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's oft-cited "willing suspension of disbelief," what W. R. Irwin described so well as a "conspiracy of intellectual subversiveness" (9). In explicit allegory, not only is the physical world and body left behind for imaginary ones (Cox 73), but dysfunctional, incoherent, and pluralistic epistemologies also are left behind and a coherent one is accepted, in which meaning and truth do exist.

Much of this is accomplished by devices and tropes. At the onset of many fantasy narratives, the authors take the readers completely out of their worlds via entries into secondary worlds, which are designed to appear justified or rational. One technique for this is the use of gates or portals (Schlobin, *Literature* xxvii), for example, Andre Norton's Seige Perilous in her *Witch World* (1963) and Edgar Rice Burroughs' multi-colored, multi-purposed rays in his Barsoom/Mars series (1917-64). Some authors use talismans to transport characters and readers, such as Stephen R. Donaldson's white gold in *Lord Foul's Bane* (1977) and the magic bumbershoot in Marvin Kaye's *The Incredible Umbrella* (1979). Another method is the use of seeming technology or science, like the mathematics in L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt's Incomplete Enchanter series (1941-60).

A few authors eschew the portal completely and play the epistemological game of changing the essential assumptions of existence. Primary among these is the alternate history, like Poul Anderson's *High Crusade* (1960) and *A Midsummer Tempest* (1974), Philip K. Dick's *The Man in the High Castle* (1962), and Kingsley Amis' *The Alteration* (1976). Yet other writers, like Tolkien and his myriad followers, do not even engage the problem, assume reader expectation, and toss the reader right into the secondary world while offering the support, familiarity, and credibility enhancements of glossaries, appendices, and maps in what Robert H. Boyer and Kenneth J. Zahorski have called "high fantasy" (1-4).

Yet another group of fiction uses what could be described as simultaneous biworlds: two realms coexist, and the fantasy one is the more important and truth filled. One simple way this is done is by alternating chapters between the two with special characters being the bridges between them. Thus, the superior and more insightful fantasy world explicates the normal one. A recent author who makes extensive use of this technique is Charles de Lint in, for example, *Moonheart* (1984) and *Drink the World Down* (1990) in which he cycles between a Celtic-like fairyland and Ottawa, Canada. A more sophisticated method is to interleave the fantasy realm with the normative one rather than separate them; both exist in all chapters rather than being independent in alternating ones. Examples of this are Sanders Anne Laubenthal's Mobile, Alabama, and the Arthurian realm in *Excalibur* (1973); Gene Wolfe's imaginary Illinois town and the Arthurian realm in *Castleview* (1990); Charles Williams' Land of the Dead and World War II London in *All Hallows' Eve* (1945), Megan Lindholm's Seattle and street-people-wizards' numinous world in *Wizard of the Pigeons* (1987), and Peter S. Beagle's lycanthropy and New York's Upper West Side in "Farrell and Lila the Werewolf" (1971).

Once these secondary worlds are established, techniques of sharing truth and information vary. Among the most heavy handed is the intrusive narrator. This is at its most extreme in formulaic fiction, like Manly Wade Wellman's Silver John series or the latest incarnation in Michael Moorcock's Elric of Melnibonµ series (1963-), *The Revenge of the Rose* (1991). More subtle authors employ guides (Frye, "Varieties" 26), wisdom figures, and shamans who deliver soliloquy-like speeches or lessons to share meanings with, educate, and inform readers. C. S. Lewis, in Narnia Chronicles (1950-56) and *That Hideous Strength* (1945), has Aslan interact with the children and the Pendragon with Mark Studdock, respectively, to accomplish this. In Susan Cooper's The Dark Is Rising series (1965-77), Will Stanton is tutored by his Uncle Merriman, actually Merlin, as Will discovers he is the last born in a series of sorcerers, the "Old Ones."

Within all of this, fantasy literature must explicitly force its allegorical burden of meaning and exegesis to compensate for readers' lack of referentiality. It's as if zero-based accounting has metamorphosed into zero-based awareness and thinking. While this may make for clarity, it is also far clumsier than traditional allegory once was. An unnervingly obvious example of this is Michael Swanwick's "The Dragon Line." In this cyberpunk update of the Arthurian legend, not only does Swanwick feel the need to recapitulate the traditional and oft-told natures of Camelot (427) and the conflict between Arthur and Modred (426-7, 428, 434) but also the deplorable state of the world's ecology (430, 432-3).

Paul de Man, in his essay for the English Institute, wondered "Why is it that the furthest reaching truths about ourselves and the world have to be stated in such a lopsided, referentially indirect way?" (2). One obvious answer, in regard to any modern, popular literature, is that accompanying explication certainly makes for easier, more accessible reading, a possibility that should be dismissed

too quickly amid the American thirst for mindless entertainment. Why peel the pearl if someone else will do it?

From a more conscientious perspective, if the claims by the postmodernists and subjectivists that art either has no meaning or only personal meaning are true, it seems fantasy art and artists don't like those conclusions very much. Contemporary fantasy art continues to assert that it must have "a priori judgments of necessity and universality" (Honig 43) and truth to exist and that the debate of life following art or vice versa is hardly over. Fantasy literature does insists on its own meanings even when its audience is incapable. Thus, fantasy again maintains its paradoxical nature by giving art meaning when art supposedly doesn't have any.

In general, audiences demand these deeper meanings. Even though the primary techniques for this -- allegory, symbol, metaphor, etc. -- are disabled, they still want the presentation of the seemingly "sacred" in modern fantasy. Certainly, this perceived and seeming significance, be it true or false, is a comfort in the face of an often confusing world and salves technophobia (Frye, "Varieties" 39). Sacred worlds are invariably more interesting, better, truer, and infinitely more stable (Schlobin, *Literature* xxviii) than the profane. Moreover, the vision that events are saturated with greater meanings and significances -- whether they are understood, explained, or in the hands of an absolutely trustworthy deity -yields a sense of harmony and understanding in the human psyche and, with it, imaginings of power and control. For a time, it makes unattainable dreams paradoxically possible -- Eden, the pastoral, the utopian, equilibrium, equality, justice -- all those things lacking in an incoherent and practical life. Certainly, this vision must be fictive, both in conception and reception. As Stephen J. Greenblatt has pointed out, in echoing Northrop Frye's observation that "all commentary is allegorical" in its attaching of interpretation to ideas (Anatomy 89), "... allegory, in attempting and always failing to represent reality, inevitably reveals the impossibility of this project. This impossibility is precisely the foundation upon which all representation, indeed all discourse, is constructed" (Greenblatt viii).

Of course, the issue here is nowhere near as serious as many would like to make it. Allegory and fantasy are play -- rule-governed departures from the everyday that, thankfully, allow free and vital use of the imagination and that help "determine what we consider to be fact just as surely as the other way around" (Cox 79). Let the deconstructionists and subjectivists seek to fractionalize and reduce meaning, to steal "the precious" and think it dead and buried. They may know and understand better, but they feel less.

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THE MONSTERS ARE TALISMANS AND TRANSGRESSIONS: Tolkien and Sir Gawain and the Green Knight¹

Any attempt at a source study of J.R.R. Tolkien's The Hobbit and The Lord of the Rings, especially with Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, is dangerous. An extraordinarily well-read scholar, Tolkien brought a large hoard of reading and knowledge to any task, be it fiction or nonfiction. In some source studies, paths of transmission are difficult to identify; in Tolkien's case, they are far too easy. This is especially true when attempting to use such often slippery elements as character, setting, and device, which can be fraught with uncertainty. Tom Shippey's extraordinary work with philology, in The Road to Middle-earth and elsewhere, provides far greater precision. Nonetheless, there are tempting literary possibilities for the origins of Tolkien's fantasy epic in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, but without an effort as dedicated as John Livingston Lowes' The Road to Xanadu: A Study into the Ways of the Imagination (1927), it may be that Tolkien is too eclectic to be pinned to any specific inspirations although, perhaps, not quite as impossible as C.S. Lewis indicated: "No one ever influenced Tolkien – you might as well try to influence a bandersnatch" (Carpenter 201).

Yet, even with the possibility of misadventure so immediate, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight is a very alluring prospect for a source if, ultimately, only from a moral or philosophical perspective. This proposition is made even more daunting than just Tolkien's erudition could make it because he never mentioned any specific influences and there is very little that is original to Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (cf. Brewer). As with most great literature, it is not what the romance does but how it does it. Thus, Tolkien could have just as easily found a generic element of the romance not specifically in it but in any one of a number of its sources and analogues. Still, John M. Fyler speculates that the romance "... was much on Tolkien's mind when he was writing the trilogy" (120-2), and his observation draws merit from Tolkien's long involvement with it. He first encountered Sir Gawain and the Green Knight at King Edward's School, probably when he was about fifteen or sixteen (Carpenter 35), and it remained a lifelong preoccupation and a focus for much of his scholarly activity. Christopher Tolkien, Miriam Youngerman Miller, and Tom Shippey summarize Tolkien's formal activity with Sir Gawain and the Green Knight: his first edition in 1925, his W.P. Ker lecture in 1953 (reprinted in Christopher Tolkien's The Monsters and the Critics and Other Essays), and his verse translation in 1975 (C. Tolkien 1-2; Miller 345;

Shippey, "Tolkien" 213-4). He struggled with his translation and reported in September of 1963 that he hoped it would go to press soon (*Letters* 333), but by November of 1965, he was still trying to finish the apparatus, especially the introduction (*Letters* 364). Tolkien had one other excursion into explicitly Arthurian fiction, his unfinished poem *The Fall of Arthur*. He abandoned it sometime in the mid-1930's despite enthusiastic reactions by E.V. Gordon and R.W. Chambers (Carpenter 168) and his own 1955 indication that he still hoped to finish it (*Letters* 219).²

Exactly how tempting sources can be, as well as how dangerous, is illustrated by Miller's ill-conceived observation that Smaug is an obvious allusion to the dragon in Beowulf (346). Certainly, both episodes include a thief, a ravaging dragon and its hoard, and a dragon slayer. Unfortunately, these similarities are far too superficial to be convincing. On one hand, in Beowulf, the protagonist is abandoned by his thanes and aided only by Wiglaf. Together, the heroic two directly attack the dragon, and it is slain through their prowess. Beowulf dies to save his people (not "needlessly" as Jane Chance has suggested [152]). Wiglaf survives as a promise that the Anglo-Saxon cycle of woe to joy to woe may, one day, turn to joy again. On the other hand, in *The Hobbit*, Smaug has considerably more personality than Beowulf's dragon, as well as a history (31-2); he is a sentient, conversational creature (212-7), not just a beast. Bilbo, the company's designated "burglar" (31), and the Anglo-Saxon thief do randomly steal a valuable object, but Bilbo steals a second time and his prize, the Arkenstone of Thrain, is specific, not random, and is pivotal later in the narrative (257). Furthermore, Tolkien's characters do not advance on the dragon as Beowulf and Wiglaf do. Bilbo and company fear destruction, and they rely on stealth rather than confrontation. Smaug is not even slain by Bilbo or any of his company but by Bard, Captain of Esgaroth, whose black arrow finds the one missing scale in the dragon's armor (237). Tolkien's source for Smaug could have been any number of childhood dragon tales, heard long before his formal education began. For example, he was fascinated with Andrew Lang's Red Fairy Book, especially that tale of Fáfnir and Sigurðr (Carpenter 22-3). Also, he could just as easily discovered or constructed the ubiquitous combination of the dragon, hoard, thief, and battle in the Poetic Edda and other Northern European epics (Garmonsway 333-9), the Roman tale of Regulus and the Carthaginian serpent (264-241 B.C.E), the Assyro-Babylonian Marduk and Tiamat-as-dragon, or even the Chinese treasure dragon fu-ts'ang lung (Shuker 89). In short, the hoard-coveting dragon versus the hero is no more distinctive to Beowulf as a source than its mead hall and wyrd are. In fact, it's far more likely that Beowulf was a source for

"Turambar and the Foalókë" (cf. *Book* 106-12, *Silmarillion* 222-6) than it was for *The Hobbit* and that Fáfnir was the source for Smaug.

Miller, drawing extensively on Tolkien's "On Fairy-Stories," also suggests parallels between the settings of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight and The Lord of the Rings. However, to postulate secondary or tertiary worlds in Medieval romance (348) and to suggest that Medieval romance could be considered fantasy (350) clearly ignore the period's immanent cosmology (cf. Huizinga, esp. 220-33). Little occurred that was not "meaning filled," so much so that authors resorted to dream visions to suspend emphatically the supernaturally saturated everyday. Certainly, in 1400, Gawain's excursions into wonder would only be questioned by the most skeptical or empirical. This, of course, would not prevent the creative Tolkien from seeing it as fantasy although the scholarly Tolkien would have been shocked at such conclusions. In fact, his exposures to secondary worlds are by no means restricted to a modern reading of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and by "On Fairy-Stories" first presentation (1939), Tolkien was already forty-seven years old and the beneficiary of a large reading experience, some of which contained alternate worlds. For example, he was well aware of the works of William Morris, George MacDonald, and his friends C.S. Lewis and Charles Williams (Carpenter 69-70, 242, 150) although he had varying affections for the first two and very little for Lewis' Chronicles of Narnia (Carpenter 201).³

Characters have also presented alluring possibilities to scholars. John M. Fyler draws a parallel between Frodo's and Gawain's "passive endurance" (121), and Miller suggests one between Tom Bombadil and the Green Knight/Bertilak. Certainly, both Frodo's and Gawain's commitment to their quests demonstrate their common endurance. However, Gawain is hardly passive. His aggressiveness is demonstrated by his willingness to stop Arthur from accepting the Green Knight's challenge, his energetic response to Bertilak's wife on the second day, and his prompt readiness for combat after he has been nicked by the Green Knight's axe. No, Gawain is forceful in his dedication, not passive. Passivity also seems to be the wrong description for Frodo as well. Hobbits are resilient. Like the archetypal fool (Schlobin, "Survival" 124), Hobbits consistently bounce back; they are indomitable. For example, three Hobbits, lest Sméagol/Gollum's origins be forgotten (Fellowship 62), arrive at the Crack of Doom. "There is a seed of courage hidden (often deeply, it is true) in the heart of the fattest and most timid hobbit, waiting for some final and desperate danger to make it grow" (Fellowship 151). Samwise is probably a better illustration of this resiliency than Frodo since he is not infected by the Ring and more of a "pure Hobbit."

After the Ring's destruction and Frodo's acceptance of "the end of all things," it is Samwise who says, "But after coming all that way I don't want to give up yet. It's not like me, somehow, if you understand" (*Return* 228).

Miller's suggested parallel between the Green Knight and Tom Bombadil also seems flawed. Both, as Miller suggests, have lovely wives, are physically similar when Bertilak is in human form (353-4), and are lords of small domains. These do not seem to be the compelling parallels that constitute a source relationship. Miller cites John Gardner's observation, in The Complete Works of the Gawain Poet (1965), that the Green Knight is a symbolic representation of the forces of nature just as Tom Bombadil is the controller of nature in his domain and sees them both as "nature figures" (354-55), what some Medieval scholars have identified as a vegetation numen although the Green Knight is a generative figure only in appearance - an icon without substance. However, Bertilak is only associated with the vegetation god, and thus like Bombadil, when he is temporarily the Green Knight, not when he's himself. More pertinently, Bombadil is very much his own person whereas Bertilak is Morgan le Fay's pawn in either guise. Bombadil is not "morally neutral," as Miller asserts (355). He knows "about evil things and good things, things friendly and things unfriendly, cruel things and kind things ..." (Fellowship 141). He is certainly morally active and benevolent enough to sing Merry and Pippin free from Old Man Willow, deliver the Hobbits from the Old Forest, and save them from the Barrowwight and arm them (Fellowship 131, 153-7). Gandalf and Elrond explain that the Ring has no power over him, a fact foreshadowed by its not making him invisible, and that it is of utterly no interest to him. He would be a "most unsafe guardian" since he would just forget the Ring or throw it away. He is known to the Elves as "oldest and fatherless," a creature from a cosmos that precedes them all, and while he could not defy Sauron, he would probably be the last to fall (Fellowship 142, 144, 278-9). Thus, while he's not simply "morally neutral" and is enormously powerful in his realm. he is just not part of the game of the Ring. He's an anachronism and not one of the strategic pieces that even the ancient Ents are or that Morgan makes Bertilak and his wife. As such, Bombadil anticipates Merlin's later lack of effectiveness due to his better-left-undisturbed magic in C.S. Lewis' That Hideous Strength (1945).4

Among the more intriguing parallels between the *Lord of the Rings* and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is their absentee villains. Sauron does not appear, and Morgan le Fey appears only briefly. While Sauron exists in person in a number of the *History of Middle-earth* volumes – most notably in "Beren and Luthien" in *The Silmarillon* – in *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of*

the Rings, he exists only as a disembodied presence, described nominalistically rather than incarnately. Both work their mayhem through pawns and, like most of fantasy's villains, are the creative nemeses of conservative good (cf. Schlobin, "In Search" passim). Morgan serves as the scapegoat by absolving Bertilak and his lady from the responsibility for their acts (Benson 35), thus allowing the two knights to part as friends after the nick at the Green Chapel. Bertilak's and his lady's equivalents in The Lord of the Rings are the Ringwraiths and the Mouth of Sauron as well as, perhaps, the Ring itself. However, Tolkien never recognizes Morgan as the romance's puppeteer. He insists that Bertilak's abode and the place of temptation is "a real chivalrous castle, no mirage of enchantment or abode of fays, where the laws of courtesy, hospitality, and morality run" ("Sir" 82). Also, Tolkien believes that "... we learn in the end that the lord and lady were conniving ..." ("Sir" 82). This is very odd since he certainly knew of Morgan, as his note in the first edition of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight indicates (Tolkien and Gordon 116; 2nd ed. 130), but he attributes no significance to her in his discussions of the romance, and only mentions her directly in regard to the Green Knight's confidence in her and indirectly in asserting that even "faierie" is "ultimately under God" ("Sir" 103). It is hard to believe that he did not know of Lucy Allen Paton's 1903 study of Morgan's hatred of Arthur and its pervasiveness in Medieval literature (13-24) or of Morton W. Bloomfield's and Albert B. Friedman's later confirmations of this animosity. It was so apparent to Medieval audiences that Morgan is eliminated from the later The Grene Knight, a debased version of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (Tolkien and Gordon, 2nd ed. xx), and replaced with the neutral Agostes to shift *The Grene Knight*'s focus to comraderie rather than antagonism (Schlobin, "The Turke" 112). Perhaps, Tolkien ignores Morgan because he chose to focus on Gawain's confession and absolution (Shippey, "Tolkien" 217) or on what he perceives as the work's didacticism ("Sir" 73), which requires free will. Of course, another possibility is Tolkien's general disinterest in female characters in The Lord of the Rings and elsewhere; he does, for example, also omit Grendel's mother from "The Monsters and the Critics." The wonderfully willful and assertive Éowyn is the only significant, multidimensional woman amid numerous male ones. The Lady Galadriel is important, but she is idealized beyond humanity and singular. Hobbit wives appear, most notably Rose: Entwives have disappeared; and Goldberry entertains, but they are homely rather than critical presences. Given Tolkien's inability to see Morgan, it is unlikely that, as an absentee villain, she had any influence on the creation of Sauron on any basis other than the most subliminal.

Another tempting connection is the works' heroes. Miller suggests that both *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* and *The Lord of the Rings* are heroic quests, can be analyzed within Joseph Campbell's monomyth, and that Frodo is a hero (346-7). Both share the departure and the arduous tasks although Gawain's are more amorous than difficult until he must kneel in the Green Chapel. However, Frodo does not make the cyclic return, the departure and return, that Gawain does, and if anyone completes the monomyth, it would be Samwise. Rather, Frodo pauses in the Shire, largely watching others scour it, before he departs with the rest of the marvelous characters for Valinor (*Return* 309). Tolkien explained this to his son, Christopher, prior to writing it:

The Book will prob. end up with Sam. Frodo will naturally become too ennobled and rarified by the achievement of the great Quest, and will pass West with all the great figures; but S[amwise] will settle down to the Shire and gardens and inns. C[harles] Williams who is reading it all says the great thing is that its *centre* is not in strife and war and heroism (though they are understood and depicted) but in freedom, peace, ordinary life and good liking (*Letters* 105).

Like Gawain, Frodo is bound by the same *geas* that compels Gawain and all the virtuous – inescapable promises that even affect Gollum (*Two* 246) and ultimately extend to Samwise (*Two* 341). However, while, on one hand, Gawain's motivations are honor (or the avoidance of shame) and his fear for Arthur's safety, on the other hand, Frodo's is love (*Return* 177, *Letters* 325). While honor would be too lofty a virtue for Hobbits to discuss or claim, Frodo always tries to avoid being "faithless" (*Two* 299), and he abides that sacred promises are such in Middle-earth that "all but the wickedest feared to break them" (*Fellowship* 21). Even the dead, "the Men of the Mountains," are ultimately drawn to honor theirs (*Return* 55, 62-3). Gandalf, also, makes his own specific commitment quite clear: "... the rule of no land is mine But all worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands, those are my care" (*Return* 30).

Of course, like Gawain, Frodo "fails his ultimate test" (Miller 360; Tolkien, *Letters* 251) but for very different reasons. Gawain's fall is because of selfish reasons although Tolkien either resisted or rejected this interpretation. He is nicked because he takes the green girdle in the false hope that it will save his life, a transgression he takes far more seriously than Arthur's court, which is overjoyed just to see him alive again. Gawain's failure is individual and moral; Frodo's is not. Frodo too believes the Ring

will be to his advantage if he keeps it, but this isn't really personal or selfish because he never masters the Ring. Ever it drags at him as he suffers under the glare of Sauron's "Eye" (Two 238), a dread and a despite later echoed so virulently in Stephen R. Donaldson's Thomas Covenant series. The Ring is Sauron's "creature"; like a familiar, it is saturated with his transferred power and belongs only to him just as he belongs to it. Under the Ring's spell, Frodo mistakenly believes he can claim it as his own and rejects his task (Return 223). As Tolkien explained, "I do not think Frodo was a moral failure. At the last moment the pressure of the Ring would reach its maximum – impossible, I should have said, for any one to resist, certainly after long possession, months of increasing torment, and when starved and exhausted" (Letters 326). Later, he adds, "If you [Miss J. Burn] re-read all the passages dealing with Frodo and the Ring, I think you will see that not only was it *quite impossible* for him to surrender the Ring, in act or will, especially at its point of maximum power [the Crack of Doom], but that this failure was adumbrated from far back" (Letters 251; also, see no. 246).

Also, neither Gawain nor Frodo was strong enough. As Tolkien observes:

Frodo had become a considerable person, but of a special kind: in spiritual enlargement rather than in increase of physical or mental power; his will was much stronger than it had been, but so far it had been exercised in resisting not using the ring and with the object of destroying it. He needed time, much time, before he could control the Ring or (which in this case is the same) before it could control him; before his will and arrogance could grow to a stature in which he could dominate other major hostile wills (*Letters* 329).

Boromir of Gondor may be closer to the more traditional failed hero, like Gawain, just as is Aragorn to the noble hero. Miller indicates Boromir fails in "his own trial of temptation by the Ring" (359). His early attempt to convince Gandalf of the Ring's efficacy as a weapon of their (or his) own foreshadows his later attempt to take it from Frodo (*Fellowship* 281, 385, 414-16; *Two* 289). His madness passes, but he does a far greater penance than Gawain for his transgression (*Two* 15-6; *Return* 86). However, Boromir is difficult to recognize in this capacity because, despite all tales of his earlier prowess, he lacks Gawain's and Aragorn's general nobility or sensitivity to the noble. He even doubts the Lady Galadriel for which Aragorn chastises him (*Fellowship* 373). In this, he perhaps serves as the archetypal naysayer just as Unferth does in *Beowulf*. In short, Aragorn is

more like Gawain in his chivalry and protectiveness while Boromir does have something of Gawain in him in his final, ill-fated protection of Merry

and Pippin.

Ultimately, it's important to note that Frodo, in "The Story of the Nine-fingered Frodo and the Ring of Doom" (Return 229), is the Ringbearer, not the Ring-destroyer (that position falls to the ill-fated Gollum). He is not the traditional hero. In The Lord of the Rings, traditional heroes, in the Campbell monomyth mode, are relegated to being the diversion. Gandalf's, Aragorn's, and the rest of the fellowship's final task is only to draw and misdirect the Eye of Sauron in futile assault (Return 156) while Hobbits do the serious work.

As significant as the characters are, the two works' talismans are also potent for opposing reasons. The green girdle is a placebo but has power because of Bertilak's wife's persuasiveness and because Gawain so desperately wants it to be real. Tolkien's Ring, however, is real with powers and desires of its own, so much so that it functions as a character. Gandalf warns of its self-determination, "'A Ring of Power looks after itself, Frodo. It may slip off treacherously, but its keeper never abandons it" (Fellowship 64). The archimage further relates that Bilbo became "Thin and stretched ... a sure sign that the ring was getting control" (Fellowship 56). Tolkien reiterates this immense and corrupting power a number of times: "... the power of Evil in the world is *not* finally resistible by incarnate creatures, however 'good...'" (Letters 252). "Is it possible for the good, even the saintly, to be subjected to a power of evil which is too great for them to overcome – in themselves" (Letters 252-3). Frodo becomes the Ring's puppet just as Bertilak and his lady are Morgan's. Gawain, in contrast, might initially be motivated by chivalry, a faith he wholly embraced, and later blemished by inappropriate self-preservation, but in either case, his negative motivations come from within. Frodo's come from without.

In the end, it may be that there is no source relationship, that *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* does not have a functional set of similarities with *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings*. Yet, it might also be that the parallels are philosophical and moral rather than specific.

As is typical in fantasy's and Medieval romance's extreme moral orders, Tolkien is quick to condemn the evil and forgive the good. He might appear to be very patient with Saruman, Gollum, and the cannibalistic Wormtongue, despite their foulness, but they have important functions at the end of the epic that justify their survival and they are punished before closure. For the good, there is a strong sympathy toward error and mercy in Tolkien's idiosyncratic interpretation of the Medieval poem and his epic. In

his analysis of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, unlike many other scholars, he concentrates on Gawain's confession and absolution ("Sir" 87-8), not on his fault. This is a very forgiving stance. For him, the poem is didactic, not only for the audience, but for Gawain as well (73). As he explained, "We have seen a gentle courtly knight learn by bitter experience the perils of Courtesy ..." (99). This emphasis on correction and education, through experience, seems to extend into *The Lord of the Rings* as well, especially in a very telltale passage in which Gandalf instructs Pippin after the Hobbit was drawn to gaze into the Palantir that Wormtongue threw from Orthanc:

"You knew you were behaving wrongly and foolishly; and you told yourself so, though you did not listen. I did not tell you all this before, because it is only by musing on all that has happened that I have at last understood, even as we ride together. But if I had spoken sooner, it would not have lessened your desire, or made it easier to resist. On the contrary! No, the burned hand teaches best. After that[,] advice about fire goes to the head" (*Two* 204).

However, there are far greater lessons and penalties in The *Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* than burned hands and nicked necks, lessons that benefit others at the sufferers' expense. These fall initially to Bilbo and ultimately to Frodo as he suffers far greater hardships than Gawain's three days and personal humiliation. In fact, Frodo's ordeal and fall makes the knight's appear domestic. Tolkien goes out of his way to stress Frodo's martyrdom: "There exists the possibility of being placed in positions beyond one's power. In which case (as I believe) salvation from ruin will depend on something apparently unconnected: the general sanctity (and humility and mercy) of the sacrificial person" (*Letters* 252). It is within this context that

Frodo undertook his quest out of love – to save the world he knew from disaster at his own expense, if he could; and also in complete humility, acknowledging that he was wholly inadequate to the task. His real contract was only to do what he could, to try to find a way, and to go as far on the road as his strength of mind and body allowed. He did that. I do not myself see that the breaking of his mind and will under demonic pressure after torment was any more a *moral* failure than the breaking of his body would have been – say, by being strangled by Gollum, or crushed by a rock (*Letters* 327).

Throughout his *Letters*, Tolkien stresses the inevitability of Frodo's (and, by analogy, Gawain's?) fall to greater and stronger forces and the necessity for the Fellowship and friends to accomplish an effective self-sacrifice:

It is possible for the good, even the saintly, to be subjected to a power of evil which is too great for them to overcome – in themselves. In this case the cause (not the 'hero') was triumphant, because by the exercise of pity, mercy, and forgiveness of injury, a situation was produced in which all was redressed and disaster averted (*Letters* 252-3).

This necessity for generous and unfailing support to overcome evil, when it cannot be done individually, is stressed throughout *The Lord of the Rings*. It might be Boromir's death; the Elves' *lembas*, which, along with Samwise, are all that sustain Frodo (*Return* 213); the heroes' diversion at the Gates of Mordor; the eagles' rescues; the Ents' purposeful agitation; Tom Bomdadil's sanctuary and rescues; Éowyn's and Merry's courage at the Battle of Pelennor Fields; Shadowfax's bearing of Gandalf; Ghân-buri-Ghân's guidance to Gondor. The list seems endless. It is within this context that Gollum's survival is justified, not only because of his role at the Crack of Doom, but for what Frodo's kindness gains for him amid a much larger context:

Frodo had done what he could and spent himself completely (as an instrument of providence) and produced a situation in which the object of his quest could be achieved. His humility (with which he began) and his sufferings were justly rewarded by the highest honour; and his exercise of patience and mercy towards Gollum gained him Mercy; his failure was redressed (Tolkien, *Letters* 326).

Thus, within the violence of the epic form and within his interpretation of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Tolkien chooses the softer virtues – forgiveness, mercy, pity, learning, nobility, humility, friendship, loyalty – much as the Gawain Poet does. Frodo and Gawain are both lauded for their accomplishments. This does not mean that arduous prices are not paid in *The Lord of the Rings*: Denethor falls to despair, Théoden to the Lord of the Nazgûl; Gandalf falls with the Balrog and will survive only until his task is done (*Two* 106); and Bilbo and Frodo will never again be the carefree creatures they once were, which is why they are granted entry into Valinor with the Elves while the rest of the Hobbits

remained. The Ring almost consumes Frodo and Bilbo, leaving their flesh frail, if long-lived, but their spirits glowing. This is because Tolkien did create an immanent world in Middle-earth just as the Gawain Poet reflected his. Nothing is without meaning; higher goals and powers must be served. Individual sacrifices are costly, but they are for the greatest good as the world is left safe. Thus, while it is probably almost certain that nothing can be directly proved regarding the influence of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, Tolkien's epic does share an intrinsic commitment to responsible virtue with it and that might be the result of the discovery of a great Medieval poet by an impressionable teenager.

NOTES

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²I am told that an edition of Tolkien's poetry is currently being done

but that there is no estimated publication date.

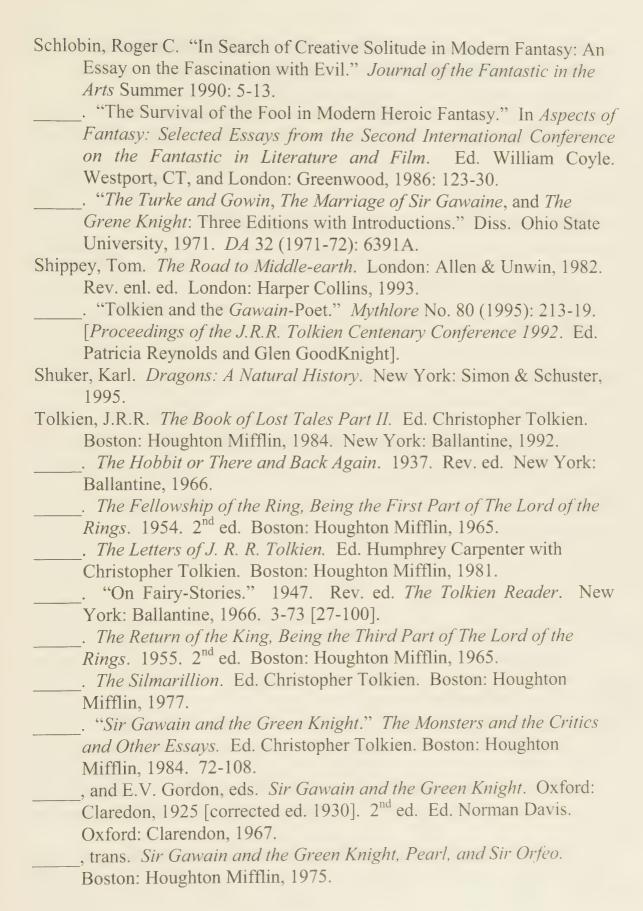
³ Tolkien evaluated Lewis' *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by saying to Roger Lancelyn Green, "It really won't do! I mean to say: 'Nymphs and Their Ways, The Love-Life of a Faun!'" And later, he remarked, "It is sad that 'Narnia' and all that parts of C.S.L.'s work should remain outside the range of my sympathy, as much of my work was outside his" (Carpenter 201). For an extended discussion of Tolkien's reaction to Lewis' Narnia, see Christopher, Joe R. "J.R.R. Tolkien: Narnian Exile." *Mythlore* No. 55 (Autumn 1988): 37-45; No. 56 (Winter 1988): 17-23. For his relationship with Charles Williams, see Rateliff, John D. "'And Something Yet Remains to Be Said': Tolkien and Williams." *Mythlore* No. 45 (Spring 1986): 48-54.

⁴The chronological relationship between Tolkien's Bombadil and Lewis' Merlin is difficult to ascertain. Tolkien obviously created his character (1934) before Lewis did his, and Tolkien had completed the first twelve chapters of *The Fellowship of The Ring* by early 1939. Lewis would have heard these, then, before he began writing *That Hideous Strength* in

1942.

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THE FORMULAIC AND RITES OF TRANSFORMATION IN ANDRE NORTON'S MAGIC SERIES

Like many popular children's and juveniles' books. Andre Norton's are formulaic. Recurrent patterns -- like those used in the Hardy Boys, Nancy Drew. and Tom Swift series -- provide particular comfort to readers, one to which they return again and again. This phenomenon is not restricted to younger people. Comfort has vaulted the predictable puns of Piers Anthony's Xanth series onto the best-seller lists and rewarded Manly Wade Wellman's lock-step Silver John Chronicles with many readers. In fact, there is a strong case for fantasy literature and particularly its heroic form as formulaic prose: evil is abroad in the land, a hero and fellowship arise with the prerequisite wizard, a psychomachia occurs, and good is restored. So Andre Norton's high library circulation and sales, along with the translations of her works into numerous languages and numerous fans, indicate that her formidable, six-decade-long canon that began in 1934 with the boys' adventure The Prince Commands continues to draw an avid audience for its predictability as well as its craft. Further, as one of the pioneers of strong and credible female characters, her fiction has appeal to both genders (Schlobin, Andre Norton: A Primary xxx; Yoke, "Slaying" passim).

Much of Norton's juvenile fiction and the Magic series in particular --Dragon Magic, Fur Magic, Lavender-Green Magic, Octagon Magic, Red Hart Magic, and Steel Magic -- concentrate on the dynamics of coming-of-age, selfrealization, and rites of transformation as her young people discover themselves and their strengths. The formula is 1) a child, teen-ager, or a fellowship of either is displaced into a new and alien environment in the ordinary world (Schlobin, Andre Norton: A Primary xxx-xxxii; Yoke, Roger 13). 2) The protagonists are anxious, unhappy, and confused. They are troubled by awkward events and frequently perceive their displacements as abandonments (Schlobin, Andre Norton: A Primary xxx-xxxi). 3) Through some set of events, a portal or means to a fantasy world is discovered. 4) The other world (usually one based on history or mythology) is entered and a task of heroic magnitude, a struggle against evil to which both worlds are liable, is presented; and 5) by meeting the challenges, the characters are transformed into better people than they were at the onset (Schlobin. Andre Norton: A Primary xxvii; Yoke, Roger 13; Wendland 9). In this process. they are often aided by guides, learning, and art, and their triumphs are part of one of the oldest and most appealing of literary quests: "the success and elevation of the innocent" (Schlobin, Andre Norton: A Primary xxviii).

Two factors are the primary causes of the standard openings: a) awkward and problematic separation from a warm home and b) troublesome parents or guardians and/or difficulties in the new environment. These combine to produce both alienation and loneliness among Norton's youngsters (Schlobin. *Andre Nor-*

ton: A Primary xxx-xxxii; Yoke, Roger 13). Cory Adler, in Fur Magic, tries to avoid natural order by clinging to the mechanized jeep when he is daunted by the wilderness challenges of the West, his absent father, his new family, his xenophobia (13) and equinaphobia, and his own feelings of inadequacy and cowardice (36). Holly, of Lavender-Green Magic, is distrustful of the rustic, homespun world compared to her city home, and Crock (her brother) is sure that the other children look down on them because their grandparents live and successfully scavenge in a junkyard for special treasures that people have ignorantly and insensitively discarded. Red Hart Magic's Chris Fitton and Nan Mallory both feel abandoned by their respective families and initially are at odds with each other (36). Both children's parents have remarried, and here -- as with the children's fathers in Fur Magic and Lavender-Green Magic who are, respectively, stationed and missing-in-action in Vietnam -- Norton provides real-world problems for her characters and readers. Also separated from her family, Octagon Magic's Lorrie Mallard has even had her own sense of history taken from her; she discovers that, in Canada, "... she had learned the wrong kind" In America, it's "Social Studies" (14). Thus, Lorrie, like many other Norton characters, must cross "... from a rejected past -- an empathically dead past -- to an undefined but developing future" (Wendland 11).

In addition to this, Lorrie now must live with her Aunt Margaret who is slow to recognize her need for solitude and creativity (37). The insensitive guardian who does not have true parental empathy is a common theme in Norton and is one of the links between the normal discomfort of the characters' simply moving to new environments and the unusual unpleasantries of living in new places. Another major occurrence of this is Aunt Elizabeth, in *Red Hart Magic*, who asks questions but never waits for answers (10-11, 25). Thus, Norton uses the familiar to lead her readers to the unfamiliar.

This alienation from the adult nurturer is compounded by the behavior of the children's peers, depriving the protagonists of any support (other than the occasional sibling who is still initially contentious). In *Octagon Magic*, Lorrie is taunted by "mean, hateful boys" (who later become friends as her understanding grows) with a typical, childish doggerel: "Canuck, Canuck, walks like a duck!" (13). Other illustrations from the Magic series of negative peer interaction are Nan's bouts with her peers' shoplifting and dares in *Red Hart Magic* (77, 81), the Afro-American children's excessive consciousness of their race and their imagined bigotry in *Lavender-Green Magic* (44-46) and *Dragon Magic* (10-11), and Kim's concern with his adopted status in *Dragon Magic* (25). These specific difficulties usually aren't very heroic, but Norton cleverly uses these normative concerns to foreshadow greater discomforts to come, for example, Holly's carsickness (*Lavender-Green Magic* 2). However, whether they are majestic or ordinary, the

stresses always have great and quick impacts at intimate levels: Holly, for example, immediately feels that her world has gone to pieces and she is among strangers (2-3).

Amid their personal agonies, the characters are sustained and aided by, but never fully dependent upon (cf. Yoke, "Slaying" 7), wise and often supernaturally gifted guides. Here Norton displays the deep reverence for art, learning, and wisdom that is one of the trademarks of her entire canon. Miss Charlotta Ashemeade, the mentor of *Octagon Magic*, states this Norton edit: ". . . to forget or set aside any art is an unhappy thing" (55).

While there is certainly no explicit animosity toward formal schooling in Norton's canon, She generally favors the one-to-one sharing between mentor and acolyte. The mentors are encouraging, rigorous, and non-directive, encouraging the children's self-reliance and self-discovery, perhaps the only true form of learning since all that is acquired belongs to the children and is not derived from external, dictatorial forces. In Octagon Magic, the child's guide is the long-lived Miss Ashemeade, whose life parallels the history of the octagon-shaped house and whose needlepoint, sewing, and golden needles have supernatural qualities (57). The children of Steel Magic are initially greeted and instructed in the ways of Avalon by Huon of the Horn and later are supported by Merlin. Cory shares shape and knowledge with the far more survival-wise beaver, Yellow Shell, whose body he shares in Fur Magic. His return to the ancient time of American Indian mythology and encounters with the Nez Percé's Changer and other animal shamans (i.e., the Thunderbird) provide him with profound insights into the nature of reality and the benefits of trying. So too, the children of Lavender-Green Magic learn from the folk art and crafts of their grandparents and from the wicca of the good witch, Miss Tamar.

The only other mode of learning that receives special favor is independent study in libraries, which achieve almost the status of sacred places. Lorrie in *Octagon Magic* loves the library (31, 33), and characters in the other volumes of the Magic series find them to be both sanctuaries from unpleasant onslaughts and fonts of information. Here Norton-the-author's character is mirrored in her fiction. She too loves books and research with their gifts of information and insight about the past (Schlobin, *Andre Norton: A Primary* xvi-xxii). As she describes it in "On Writing Fantasy": "But the first requirement for writing heroic or sword and sorcery fantasy must be a deep interest in and a love for history itself. Not the history of dates, of sweeps and empires -- but the kind of history which deals with daily life, the beliefs, and the aspirations of people long since dust" (8).

Norton's faith in art, nature, and mentoring is in direct contrast to her disgust for technology (Schlobin, "Andre Norton: Humanity" passim). Toward the end of *Octagon Magic*, when it becomes apparent that Miss Ashemeade's house will be

bulldozed to make way for a highway, a now-wiser Aunt Margaret makes this quite clear:

". . . in the name of progress more than one crime is committed nowadays. I wonder just who will rejoice when the last blade of grass is buried by concrete, when the last tree is brought down by a bulldozer, when the last wild thing is shot, or poisoned, or trapped" (106).

Were there any doubt of Norton's stance here, she makes it emphatically clear:

"'Yes, I am anti-machine. The more research I do, the more I am convinced that when western civilization turned to machines so heartily with the industrial revolution, they threw away some parts of life which are now missing and which lack of leads to much of our present frustration" (qtd. by Brooks 22 and Schlobin, *Andre Norton: A Primary* xxvi).

As mentioned and in contrast, wisdom is unequivocally linked to nature and natural processes. Turning away from nature and tradition and depending upon technology, as Cory does when he clings to the jeep in *Fur Magic*, is a crime against humanity's essential bonds to its past and its natural home, and no good comes of it. Miss Tamar, the benevolent witch of *Lavender-Green Magic*, shares the law of the necessary bonds and laws between humanity and nature:

""That thou lovest all things in nature. That thou shalt suffer no person to be harmed by thy hands or in thy mind. That thou walkest humbly in the ways of men and the ways of the gods. Contentment thou shalt at last learn through suffering, and from long patient years, and from nobility of mind and service. For the wise never grow old"" (70).

Thus, the combination of knowledge, experience, and understanding of the past and nature yields wisdom and harmony. And, of course, wisdom and harmony (Schlobin, *Andre Norton: A Primary* xxxii) are the ends of Norton's children's quests for truth and why her fiction has verisimilitude. What is most important to understand here is that the mentors' non-directive approaches mandate that the children learn for themselves through their adventures. Frequently, the children's malleability and willingness to learn make them far better students than their elders, and sometimes, as with Chris and Nan in *Red Hart Magic* and the four boys in *Dragon Magic*, they prosper with little or no adult intervention and are successful when and where adults cannot be (as in a number of popular, contemporary films like *War Games*, *Home Again*, and *Young Sherlock Holmes*).

Either before reaching a mentor or with the help of one, Norton's female (Yoke, "Slaying" 5) and male children always use sentient portals to gain access

to the challenges of the fantasy realm. These gates open when the proper people arrive in the proper states (usually disrupted ones) at the proper times to confront conflicts of universal significance. To add further magnitude to these conflicts, Norton frequently provides settings of epic proportions. One of the best of these occurs at the beginning of *Merlin's Mirror*:

"Time had been swallowed, was gone, and still the beacon kept to its task, while outside the [Merlin's] cave nations had risen and decayed, men themselves had changed and changed again. Everything the makers of the beacon had known was erased during those years, destroyed by the very action of nature. Seas swept in in upon the land, then retired, the force of their waves taking whole cities and countries. Mountains reared up, so that the shattered remains of onceproud ports were lifted into the thin air of great heights. Deserts crept in over green fields. A moon fell from the sky and another took its place" (5).

Norton's use of these gates into magical places to mark the beginnings of the rites of transformation is yet another common characteristic of her canon (cf. *Witch World* and Schlobin "Andre Norton: Humanity" 29-30) and is an example of a frequently used technique in fantasy literature, "rationalized fantasy" (Schlobin, *The Literature* xxvii-xxx). The gates help readers suspend disbelief, as they too journey with the characters into fantasy realms, and also provide credibility and stature for the young characters, who are the only ones special enough to be accepted by the gates. Also, on a simpler level, the gateways to and the lure of the secret and unknown world have long had special appeal to both young and old, as with C. S. Lewis' Narnia Chronicles' wardrobe.

However, before giving the characters' imaginations and courage too much credit, it should be noted that the gates sometimes give the children no choice about entering. The magical puzzles in *Dragon Magic* are compulsive in their lure (31), and *Fur Magic*'s Cory must enter the Changer's past to remedy his own ignorant tampering with a medicine bag (30-31, 43-44; also cf. Yoke, "Slaying" 6).

In *Octagon Magic*, Magic portals figure prominently as both the microcosmic doll house and the macrocosmic octagon house that surrounds it open special ways for Lorrie to follow (61). The large house only opens certain rooms for Lorrie and, as she follows Sabrina, the black cat she rescued from the abusive and rambunctious boys, she is guided to the small doll house. Its magic, doll-filled drawers and openings selectively lead her to adventures in the past. Moreover, the experiences the doll house creates are more real, more alive, than the actual one (62). Much the same occurs in *Red Hart Magic*: Chris Fitton and Nan Mallory discover that an old and intricate peep show -- modeled on an Elizabethan.

British inn -- and a dream pillow (32) lead them to shared dreams (51 ff.) of the past that are far more meaningful and yield more insight than their waking lives. Lavender-Green Magic's gate is a maze (57, 118-9); prophetic dreams guide its protagonists through its dark and bright sides to its corresponding witches, Tamar and Hagar, and Colonial America. Steel Magic's four gates open to the Arthurian realm (38-39), and Dragon Magic's four, interrelated tales use the compulsion of a four-part dragon puzzle to draw each boy back into his ancestral past: Sig Dortmund to Scandinavia, Artie Jones to Arthurian Britain, George "Ras" Brown to Africa, and the adopted Kim Stevens to China. In all cases, the gates either force or foster the drives toward transformation and growth is common among Norton's characters (Schlobin, Andre Norton: A Primary xxxi).

The worlds beyond these gates are linked to normal existence despite their superficial incongruities. They are without confusion and have and revere clear lines of good and evil, right and wrong. These values are obvious to the cleareyed and are truer than those of the normal world, which is typical of fantasy literature's more rigorous ethic systems. These realms provide the characters with far more freedom than they might have and/or with releases from too much control. As Chris observes in *Red Hart Magic*, "Kids were like animals at the old zoo. They were all in cages. Maybe you couldn't see the cages really, but they were there" (29). Thus, the other worlds provide far more autonomy and responsibility. Often, The characters have to discover and adjust to these new challenges themselves. *Fur Magic*'s Cory, for example, has difficulty learning to accept the animals' world and truths (61-124), which, while they are alien to him, actually are intuitive wisdom once he learns to overcome his inhibitions and phobias.

As mentioned earlier, the normal worlds' prosperity is tied to the fantasy realms'. Thus, in *Steel Magic*, Avalon is the bulwark against the "dark" (44), and the wars and pestilence of Earth are the results of Avalon's weakening. Throughout the Magic series, these double burdens are mighty challenges, and the young characters are assailed in mind and body by both external threats and their own self-doubts and weaknesses (Yoke, "Slaying" 13). Predictably, in *Fur Magic*, it is the evil of the Changer versus Cory's and the animals' desire to postpone the Changer's creation of humanity (158) because, with its becoming, it will dominant the animals and destroy their sentience. In *Red Hart Magic*, the children are central in saving both people and property amid the persecution of the Papists in England. The three children of *Steel Magic* must use the magically transformed steel utensils in their picnic basket to recover the three treasures of Britain -- Merlin's ring, Arthur's Excalibur, and Huon's horn -- and to save, not only Arthur's Avalon, but their own as well. *Lavender-Green Magic*'s characters' adventures in time lift the Dimsdale family curse in Sussex, Massachusetts (12).

The rewards for Norton's characters are invaluable and stress the didactic nature of productive change (cf. *Octagon Magic* 176). *Red Hart Magic*'s children discover friendship in their common dreams (71) and later this transfers to their real world (179). Chris first discovers courage and Nan independence in their dreams, and the two children bring these virtues to fruition and effectiveness later in their mundane lives. Chris is falsely accused first in his dream, and the same situation occurs later at school; the first experience prepares him to deal successfully with the second (166-72). And the necessity of the return from the fantasy world is always stressed, for to do otherwise would be "running away" (*Red Hart Magic* 175).

The essential quality of Norton's characters' successes is change (Octagon Magic 176) and self-actualization. These occur through the instructive values of experience, learning, wisdom, and open-mindedness. These trans-realm successes and epiphanies are of both cosmic and personal natures and occur through the children's creation of a bridge between worlds and each one's inhabitants. The sentient, tool-making animals of Fur Magic transform Cory's view of his own world (173-4), as do the encounters with the dragons for the boys' in *Dragon* Magic (183-192). Eric, Greg, and Sara in Steel Magic each overcome their personal weaknesses in Avalon (impatience, aquaphobia, and arachnephobia, respectively) and are much more functional when they return. So too Fur Magic's Cory loses his fear of horses when he is a beaver in the pre-human world of the sentient animals (173). Lorrie is cured of her prejudice about boys by becoming the dolls in the doll house's drawers and helps the other children overcome their own bigotry (108) by participating in the Civil War past the magic doll house recreates. She also learns how to interact with the other children in her real world. This process is outlined by Robert Scholes in Structural Fabulation; he observes that readers return changed by the fantasy experience (26); so too Lorrie and all the Magic series' characters return with different perspectives and attitudes after each of their travels.

Were this all the characters gained, Norton's fiction could be accused of being egotistic and self-serving, that her children operate only for themselves and their own gain despite whatever empathy and sympathy her readers feel. However, the revelations are not just subjective. Often, they are returns to or discoveries of the traditional values of family, self, and friends (without prejudice). Sometimes both immediate and/or extended families are found. Beyond this, Norton's characters return to their normal worlds as powerful forces (Schlobin, *Andre Norton: A Primary* xxxi-xxxii) that create harmony among all who surround them. In fact, if there is a common theme throughout all of Norton's canon, it is harmony through arduous effort (Schlobin, *Andre Norton: A Primary* xxxi-xxxii). This is not just the integration of people either. Her

fiction's dynamic interactions among a myriad of conflicting forces -- natural law and technology, good and evil, pettiness and largess, selfishness and generosity, alienation and union, action and passivity, prejudice and tolerance (Schlobin, *Andre Norton: A Primary* xxviii-xxix; Yoke, *Roger* 21; Wendland 21-22), ignorance and wisdom -- set amid history and mythology reach from the past through the present to a generative, promising future that is a celebration for her readers and characters.

While all these dynamic interactions may justify the literary merit of Norton's formula, it still does not explain her ongoing popularity among the young and the old. That answer comes from her gifts to her characters and readers, and much of her appeal results from the identification of reader with character, a point well made by Albert Wendland (2, 23). Primary among these is empowerment. Clearly, the fictive escape from the negatives of alienation and estrangement that many feel is a characteristic that has ennobled much fiction in general. Add to this the message that the young, the "odd-ones-out," also are offered special tasks that are theirs and theirs alone, and Norton offers a positive alternative to the powerlessness that young people feel in the face of the authority figure, who they are sure does not understand them. Wendland articulates this desirous state well:

"It's ... when a reader, awash with longings and expectations, might want to trade in the past, to break from the confinement of childhood and parental authority to move out of the prison of the defined past and the defined self (defined by parents and environment) to enter a larger world of freedom and adventure, to test and thus to find a self through the exploration of a new landscape beyond the old confines."

Further, the

"longing of adolescence ... is not so much a desire to know what's out there but more the desire not to know, to maintain the sense of wonder and yet to find oneself capable of encountering it" (8-9).

This freedom is enhanced by the insistent message that, regardless of what the adult and peer others might say or believe, Norton's characters have special powers and prerogatives that take them beyond their critics and detractors, that they can operate with both understanding and confidence (Bettelheim 47-48, 61). However, this is not an elitist stance. Rather, it becomes one of the primary impetuses for the theme of harmony as her protagonists return to their detractors to make friends and create positive situations, relationships, and "new homes" (Wendland 10, 12). Thus, the characters' transformations, achieved through personal traits and arduous trials, become a boon to all and emphasize the ancient truths of wisdom, art, and learning.

However, beneath all this high mindedness (didactic messages, which certainly appeal to parents selecting books for their children) is an even simpler appeal. Through their hard work, efforts, and transformations, Norton's characters gain (and share with her readers) popularity with their peers and with adults. So, the rewards are two-fold: yes, there are adventures and transformations but there are also acceptances and recognitions, perhaps the best of all adolescent worlds.

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CHARACTER, THE FANTASTIC, AND THE FAILURE OF CONTEMPORARY LITERARY THEORY

Anyone who has even dabbled in contemporary narrative theory is aware that there has been a blood bath. The author is dead; plot is dead. Amid this carnage, perhaps the most painful is the assassination of character. "... [B]y the 1950s [sic] and the nouveau roman, character, we were told, would henceforth join them [plot and setting] in exile from the novel" (Docherty Reading, x). While Norman N. Holland was referring to historical, not dramatic, characters, his 1968 observation is among the most jarring: the character "survives only in high-school teaching, in The New York Times Book Review, and the writings of Miss Mary McCarthy who, in this context, keeps strange company indeed" (246). Such patronizing tone also underlies A. D. Nuttall's statement of progress in literary study: "At one time, everybody used to talk about Shakespeare's characters as if they were real people. Today, simple folk, like Lord David Cecil and Professor Dover Wilson, still do; but the critically with-it do not, believing that this kind of talk makes no sense" (107). As early as 1930, G. Wilson Knight remarked that "The persons, ultimately, are not human at all, but purely symbols of a poetic vision" (16), and in 1933, C. H. Rickword pronounced that "... 'character' is merely the term by which the reader alludes to the pseudo-objective image he [sic] composes of his responses to an author's arrangement" (31). Thomas F. Petruso points toward the assassin more specifically: "Ever since Paul Valéry's attack on 'literary superstitions' – defined as all 'beliefs' that ignore the verbal condition of literature, including the existence of character, 'those beings without innards' (1960, 569) – French criticism and its American derivatives have led the way toward the reduction and exclusion of character, while shifting the focus of attention to strictly linguistic or rhetorical phenomena" (4).

Whenever it all began, writers' claims that their characters take on lives of their own has been pronounced by many to be a cliché (Holland 272), thereby dismissing Cervantes' calling Don Quixote his "child," Faubert's identifying himself with Emma Bovary (Rawdon Wilson, "Bright" 747), and Henry James' calling his characters "my agitated friends" (Springer 1). "Modern criticism, by and large, has relegated the treatment of character to the periphery of its attention, has at best given it polite and perfunctory nod and has regarded it more often as a misguided and misleading abstraction" (Harvey 192). Vladimir Propp's stock characters reduce them to functions in plot (66, also Chatman 114). Formalists and some structuralists, calling upon Aristotle, support Propp. For French narratologists, characters are means, not ends. "Tomashevsky and Barthes ... seem to imply that a character is nothing but verbal scapes (physical appearance, thoughts, statements, feelings) held loosely together by a proper name" (Martin 118). Many, like Roland

Barthes, see character as only a type of discourse (179). For A. J. Greimas, they are "actants" (Millington 84).

Whatever the means of the death of the character, Barthes proclaims, "What is obsolescent in today's novel is not the novelistic, it is the character ..." (95). Indeed, it is the rare contemporary study of fiction that even has an index entry for "character," and character theory has been a very rare topic for book-length studies in the last fifteen years.

The attempts to explain this phenomenon are legion. In general, Jeff Williams observes, perhaps correctly, that "... criticism is no longer as much 'close reading' as it is theoretical speculation, on language, interpretation itself, society, gender, culture, and so on" ("Packaging" 282). Certainly, character may have fallen to what Leslie Fielder describes as the process by which insights turn to fads and finally to pedagogical tyranny (29). Androgyny, for example, was eliminated by feminism; Black Studies by cultural pluralism. And it does seem that literary studies are now anything but and that characterization is only "the game of ideology" (Cixous 384) and should be read as such.

From a socio-historical perspective, Robert Alter suggests the general move from aesthetic to scientific or sociological approaches has provided "an attractive retreat from history" after the Vietnam years (7).

There are those, like Robert Scholes, who would contend that the decline "in characterization has been attributed to the exhaustion of a vein, all the types of character having already been quarried by previous generations of laborers" ("The Novel" 210). Such statements, however, should be moderated by the knowledge that numerous art forms have been pronounced moribund throughout history. For example, some eighteenth-century critics "felt that the form [the novel] had creatively exhausted itself" (Taylor 629).

Others think that some inhuman urge has doomed character. Richard Rorty, for example, blames it on immorality: "The current struggle in American literary circles between robust, old-fashioned storytelling novelists and ironist critics is a symptom of the inability of intellectuals to take such novels seriously as moral testimonies. They mine them for ambiguity, intertextuality. and the like, because they do not really recognize *morality* as a possible form of life" (179-80). Philip Roth, via his English Professor in *The Professor of Desire*, exposes the conspiracy that literary study is constituted to hide the fact that professors and literature have any relation to flesh and blood (181-3). Alter argues that "the attack on mimesis ultimately depends on defining experience out of existence," a process that "leads to a misreading of whole categories of literary works" (9). Jonathan Culler contends the relatively recent "... ethos of structuralism runs counter to the notion of individuality and the rich psychological coherence which are often applied to the novel" (Culler, *Structuralism* 230).

Others share this sense that individualism and personality are no longer of interest and that characters no longer draw audiences. Ellen E. Berry points to mass culture as the executioner of character: "Character as unique personality is replaced by the immediacy and transitory appeal of the public icon, an image created by mass media such as cinema, widely available to a heterogeneous audience and capable of unlimited reproductivity" (177). Such icon status is apparent in the Chicago press at this moment as Michael Jordon's nickname, "His Airness," merits capitalization usually reserved for the supreme deity.

M. H. Abrams may take the most pragmatic approach with the suggestion that the dismissal of character study for fresh alternatives may simply be to relieve boredom: new reading strategies provides "freshness of sensation" and make it easy "to say new and exciting things about a literary work that has been again and again discussed." "We gain a guaranteed novelty, of a kind that makes any text directly relevant to current interests and concerns" (295). For those who have been teaching the same courses and same works for year after year, this certainly sounds sensible.

The authors themselves (even though they're dead) do not escape blame. In his chapter "The Decline of Character Intensity," Robert Higbie observes that "Many modern novelists of course still create character with tension like those in earlier novels, but they rarely seem to value character as an end in itself as their predecessors did. Instead, writers became more concerned with what I have called secondary response, with thematic and formal concerns" (164). "Hence the present-day novel must be the opposite of a story" (Ortega 65). "The creation of character is a form of art, whatever else, and the modernist novel seems at times to have abjured this art for others, as cubism shattered the portrait and disposed its elements in new ways" (Price, *Forms* 47-8).

Yet another reason is the attempt to empiricize literature and the arts, indeed the creative imagination itself. As Thomas C. Schelling comments, "The human mind is something of an embarrassment to certain disciplines, notably economics, decision theory and others that have found the model of the rational consumer to be a powerfully productive one" (191). "The fervor with which linguistic-based theories were embraced in the sixties was a reflection not just of their utility, but also of particular ideological context, namely, the desire to put the humanities on a more scientific footing" (Petruso 5). Certainly, this scientific solution to "embarrassment" has been fueled by economic pressures that have forced so many humanities' departments to count beans and by the recent identification of students as consumers and art as product to be delivered pre-cooked to mental doorsteps as if aroma, not concentration, is the key to education.

This movement to scientific approaches has, of course, been the major method by which characters have been relegated to data. The vehicle is such

critical schools as structuralism and rhetoric. Numerous articles in these fields are more like geometry exercises than aesthetic explorations (e.g., Schleifer and Velie). Some find such an approach atrocious. Robert Alter, in his description of the attack on mimesis and his defense of it, says in regard to French criticism, "There is something satisfying in the idea that literature, for which such excessive claims have been made, can be pulled down to the level of all other modes of discourse; and even more important, the prospect of a value-free study of literature is positively consoling after the apparent failure of engaged [New] criticism as an idea" (8). He goes on to contend that definitions, like Jonathan Culler's, which turns homo sapiens into "homo significans, maker and reader of signs," create a critical "epistemological shift." "...[I]n this approach there are no discernible 'objects' of knowledge in human experience, only signs to be interpreted, and hence man [sic] can no longer be defined as the knower. What immediately follows from this assumption is a global expansion of the concept of text" (Alter 9). Culler himself is critical of structuralism ability to account for character: "Character is the major aspect of the novel to which structuralism has paid least attention and has been least successful in treating. Although for many readers characters serve as the major totalizing force in fiction – everything in the novel exists in order to illustrate character and its development – a structuralist approach has tended to explain this as an ideological prejudice rather than to study it as a fact of reading" (Structuralism 230). Steven Cohan is even more emphatic in his condemnation of the structuralist approach: to understand character as part of the "'verbal structure of the work' assigns to it the same textual status as rhetoric, and this designation claims to eliminate from the human figures its representation as human status entirely" (Cohan 116). It seems, then, that there is much effort here to dissolve the connection between art and the world, art and people, via what Alter offers as the two strategies "for dissolving the connection between literature and the real world": 1) reduce "everything to text" and 2) reduce everything to "arbitrary linguistic signs" (10). In fact, within this new epistemology, it is possible "to argue that a lover's caress is every bit as 'semantic' as a traffic light ..." (Alter 10).

Yet all of this, regardless of its justification, seems to eliminate any response to literature other than some sort of puzzle solving; the principle of pleasure is dismissed. "The primary experience of a work of art takes place in the orientation to its aesthetic effect, in an understanding that is pleasure, and a pleasure that is cognitive. Interpretation that bypasses this primary aesthetic experience is the arrogance of a philologist who subscribes to the error that the text was not created for readers but for him [sic], to be interpreted by such as he" (Godzich, "Preface" to Jauss xxix). Such an approach does seem to negate experiences of a history full of readers. The characters of this approach and this new fiction "will be what they

are: word beings" – as unstable, changeable, illusionary, unnamable, fraudulent, and unpredictable "as the discourse that make them" (Federman 13). The inevitable conclusion yields to the tyranny of the extreme position of reader theory and the contention that the reader is all. As Seymour Chatman concludes in *Story and Discourse*, "Characters do not have 'lives'; we endow them with 'personality' only to the extent that personality is a structure familiar to us in life and art" (138). Traits of personality as a way "to analyze character in no way implies their 'lives' extend 'beyond the [fiction] in which they are involved" (137-38). Chatman is following Marcel Proust's doctrine that all knowledge exists within the reader, and "the book" only aids in its release: "In reality, each reader reads only what is already within himself [sic]. The book is only a sort of optical instrument which the writer offers the reader to enable him [the reader] to discover in himself what he would not have found but for the aid of the book" (Proust II:1024). Such attitudes imply that characters teach nothing to readers, and in fact, they are anti-intellectual.

Most of all the death of character flies in the face of documentation of the incarnate quality readers and viewers attach to character. On a profound level, there are those who speak of changed lives and role models. For example, in response to thinking about various novels, Virginia Woolf said, "If you think of these books, you do at once think of some character who has seemed to you so real (I do not mean lifelike) that it has the power to make you think not merely of it itself, but of all sorts of things through its eyes ÷ of religion, of love, of war, of peace, of family life, of balls in country towns, of sunsets, moonrises, the immortality of the soul" (Virginia Woolf, "Mr. Bennett ..." in Hoffman and Murphy 32). Charles Child Walcutt's Man's Changing Mask: Modes and Methods of Characterization amplifies this didactic, informational message: "... clearly we read fiction because it is about people and because we expect to learn something about them, which is another way of saying that character is the central substance of fiction" (5). On a more pedestrian level, even television's characters have impact. Schelling reports, in "The Mind as Consuming Organ," that "Lassie died one night. Millions of viewers, not all of them children, grieved. At least, they shed tears. Except for the youngest, the mourners knew that Lassie didn't really exist" (177). Of course, Lassie wasn't a real dog, Moby Dick a real whale, or Gandolf a real wizard. However, "Once we become immersed in a fiction, the characters become real to us, and the world they live in momentarily takes the place of the actual world" (Ryan 21). "... we [readers] are propelled by its [a story's] human interest, by a sympathy or antipathy that cause us 'to understand the successive actions and thoughts and feelings of described character with a particular directness, and to be pulled forward by this development almost against our will' [from Gallie Philosophy and Human Understanding, 45]" (Holdheim

237). The fantastic, of course, encourages this as legions of scholars have indicated.

Readers, like the audience that desperately wants an amateur public speaker to do well, "... want the novelist to linger and to grant us good looks at his [sic] personages, their being, and their environment till we have our fill and feel that they are close friends whom we have know thoroughly in all the wealth of their lives" (Ortega 66). "People capture and engage characters" (Schelling 180). "Authors have continued to develop the novel as a medium of authorial expression even as theorists, pursuing their own interests, have disavowed the possibility" (Petruso 196). "Characters resemble people. Literature is written by, for, and about people. That remains a truism, so banal that we often tend to forget it, and so problematic that we as often repress it with the same ease" (Bal 80). "The great novelist, contemptuous of the surface of his personages, dives down into their souls and returns, clutching in his [sic] hand the deep-sea pearl. But for precisely this reason the average reader does not understand him" (Ortega 98).

To some extent, "Even theorists who formerly reduced character to 'actants,' defining them only as byproducts of the functions they performed, have come to recognize that ignorance and knowledge, vested in character as an independent entity, are crucial to an understanding of narrative theory" (Martin 117). "'Character' occupies a privileged position in the novel or the play; without 'character,' passive or active, no text' (Cixous 386). Character cannot, as Vladimir Propp and the structuralists maintain, "be restricted to denoting certain types of agents for certain typical acts" (Gelley 60). Propp's "Act of a character" (21) cannot be "correctly determined if the motives of the character are left out of account" (Bredin 298). Most pragmatically, "... character is a needed term. Removed from discourse, character would leave a significant area unaccounted for, a blantant x that would require a name, a critical designation" (Rawdon Wilson, "Bright" 749).

Theory that types characters does seem limited. A. J. Greimas identifies subject (the agent), adjuvant (any character or element assisting), obstruant (any element that hinders the agent), destinataire (indirect object of the beneficiary), and distinateur (the element under whose auspices, or in regard to which, the agent is activated) ("Les actants"), sender, mandator, and manipulator (Greimas and Fontanille 30-31). David Galef, in The Supporting Cast: A Study of Flat and Minor Characters, lists other types, such as enablers (18), foils and contestants (18-9), doubles or doppelgängers (19), emphasizers (19-20), foreshadowers (28), tellers (32), mergers (or unifiers), misapprehenders (56, like naysayers?), and listeners (58). In making character subject to plot and action, Norman N. Holland makes one of the more uninformed comments when he observes that "... literary characters are so shaped by the world in which they exist that they cannot even be

moved from book to book or play to play" (266). Even if the movement of specific characters among media – literature, film, comic books, multimedia – is ignored, Faust, King Arthur, and Grendel seem to have travelled very well from genre to genre, mode to mode.

Of course, such "types" can easily be dismissed as being too simple. To restrict character to Greimas' actant alone "is probably to write either a fairy tale or a rather short story" (Millington 84). Actants and types do seem inadequete in accounting for the richness of such characters as the shaman, for example (Schlobin, "Pagan..."). To explicate Gandalf as the "great explainer" and as part of Frodo's "Adjuvants," as Brooke-Rose does (237); to think of Iago as obstruant; or to term Ben Jonson's Mosca as even something as sophisticated as the wise servant is insensitive and simpleminded, if not outright vapid. Of course, the simplicity is often disguised by what Leslie Fiedler calls "the hermetic jargon invented by elite French critics, bent on undermining the authority of primary texts and the autonomy of their authors" (32). Many theorists demonstrate the lack of literary referentiality by the frequent omission of literary illustrations in their writings. Many choose or are forced to create their own little, elementary tales to illustrate their theories.

However, before dismissing such typing too quickly, it should be observed than main characters in fantastic literature are frequently stereotypes. One reason for this is that, in general, it is a conservative tradition (Schlobin, "In Search ...") that looks to the past for its models. Many of these characters "... and their traits emerge from their place in an ancient narrative" (A. Rorty 307). Moreover, "Since the virtuous protagonist seeks to submit to an idealized parentlike [sic] control, he [sic] is often somewhat childlike" (Higbie 34). Contemporary structuralism is helpful when examining protagonists and stock secondary characters if only because those of heroic fantasy are usually so literarily generic that they're nondistinctive and, anyway, are such dolts that they need help illuminating themselves much less anything else. However, secondary characters and settings do appear to occupy critical places in the establishment of the fantastic's other or alternate worlds. Very frequently, they are the messengers, explicators, and implementers that readers and protagonists need to understand and accept the cosmological natures and epistemological contexts of the literature, or they are essential to the action and for the success of the plot, as fellowships are to heroic quests. Thus, the main characters need to be surrounded by these forces to achieve their own completeness or balance. For example, few who have read C. S. Lewis' That Hideous Strength will forget the scene in which Ransom reveals himself as the Pendragon to the newly-awakened Merlin (274). It can be interpreted as a pivotal epiphany, an epic moment. However, it is anticlimatic since readers have learned Ransom's identity far earlier. Pages before, Denniston mentions it in conversation

with Camilla and Jane Studdock (115), and it is repeated again by Camilla when it appears Jane has forgotten (195). While Jane is certainly central to the novel, Denniston and Camilla are not by any measure. Nor would anyone see Hari Seldon's appearances in Isaac Asimov's *Foundation and Empire* as anything more than plot dramatics, focusing frequently on the irony of too little, too late.

However, while many primary and secondary characters in fantasy fail to invorgate or inspire that does not mean that there aren't a significant number who do and whose vitality cannot be reduced to type. This may be true of literature in general. Galef observes that secondary characters may be flat but possess a vitality that goes beyond the fact that they are minor, that secondary characters persist in memory, and "... science-fiction novels, more than mainstream works, depend heavily on background figures to explain the worlds they depict" (1-2, 13). William Harvey explains that "... a background figure, a mere stereotype, may be granted a moment of dramatic intensity in which he [sic] achieves fullness as a human being" (55). In regard to drama, Mahood further supports the contention that "minor" status does not mean minor impact: "In a yet further orbital of a Shakespearean play there move characters who are neither heard nor seen but who have a claim on our interest as denizens, and sometimes powerfully influential ones, of the social world the dramatist creates in each play" (6). Certainly Judas teaches that "The number of lines spoken is in any case an unreliable guide to the importance of a bit part" (Mahood 4). Lila's mother, in Peter S. Beagle's "Farrell and Lila the Werewolf' (1971), and his butterfly, in *The Last Unicorn*, are powerful instances of this in fantasy. To reduce them to assistors or enablers robs them of the lives that older character theory gives them.

Among the saddest, if not the most pathetic, of secondary characters are the artisans (Schlobin, "Artisan ..."), yet contemporary theory would label them as just "enablers." Doomed to be the hands of others' imaginations, they labor in relative obscurity producing the talismans that are often at the centers of fantastic quests or tasks. Consider Yama, the creator of all the gods' weapons and marvels in Roger Zelazny's Lord of Light. He is the eternal, pimply-faced nerd despite the bodies he assumes. Likewise, Sauron tricks the Elves into making the Rings of Power, and the crippled Ged, in Ursula K. LeGuin's The Wizard of Earthsea, suffers as a plodding laborer after he releases his shadow (70). In an anonymity that is often so severe that they are not in the work at all, these artisans suffer the blue-color derision of the elite and the powerful. Their skills and dexterity are overshadowed by the fabulous, intuitive, and supernatural. They exist beyond the pale, below the salt. In fact, when Brian Attebery discusses A. J. Greimas' "actant" versus Robert Scholes' content character, who is much more interesting for content (73), artisans don't even make the cast list. They are frequently off-stage in an a priori world, having supplied the talismans that any player may use. Thus, the ancients in

Talbot Mundy's *Jimgrim* never see Dorje's maimed use of their discoveries, Tolkien's Elves watch helplessly as Sauron perverts their creations for his own use, and Edmund Cordery, in Brian Stableford's *Empire of Fear*, dies ignorant of his own scientific success in transferring his plague to the vampires (78). Until Jane Yolen's "Evian Steel" added a new chapter to the ongoing Arthurian myth, the Lady of the Lake was nothing more than a pickup-and-delivery service.

What is most important here is to realize that part of what makes fantasy's characters incarnate is the traditional and historical baggage they carry. All characters in James Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty" are secondary. and the protagonist or titular wizard and ringmaster in Charles G. Finney's The Circus of Dr. Lao is less important than the young boy or the fabulous creatures and personages that inhabit the midway. The blind artisans in Ayram Davidson's The Phoenix and the Mirror or Gollum in Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings are minor. Their traditional roles make them who they and make them pivotal to the action and its culmination. Their lines may be small; their natures derivative. For a character like Gandalf, the mantel of a Prufrockian attendant lord seems illfitting. He is certainly the explicator of the nature and terrors of Middle-earth, whether it be fireworks or the Rings. However, when all hangs in the balance, he may be no more than a decoy, but he is that even if his epic lies somewhere with the Balrog and in his transformation to Gandalf the White—a story left unsung. Thus, whether it be the result of counting lines or appearances or by the more triumphant achievement of Samwise, Gollum, and Frodo, Gandalf is secondary despite his power and wisdom as shaman. Thus, it is curious that so much skill and ability is relegated to lesser status and remains so memorable. Megan Lindholm's Seattle and street-people-wizards' numinous world in Wizard of the Pigeons stretch types beyond their breaking points, explode them, as do L. Frank Baum's Scarecrow, Cowardly Lion, and Tinman and Lewis Carroll's rabbit hole full of lunatics.

What can be concluded then? One obvious answer is that contemporary criticism is involved in the dystopian "rather spend than mend." New is best. This is a sad failure since it sees theory and literary approaches as linear progressions, evolutions—not as a pool populated by numerous species of fish, anyone of which can be caught and served at the appropriate occasion. All approaches should always be available. For them not to be is to glorify the mentality of the one-trick pony.

Actants and types may place characters within a fiction's interaction very well; however, they cannot account for why Lin Carter's or Robert E. Howard's antagonists are different from Tolkien's or Shakespeare's. Joel Weinsheimer's solution to the conflict between mimetic and semiotic theories of character requires

a multiple perspective, but it is obviously intelligent, "... despite the fact that they are mutually contradictory ..., characters are both people and words" (210).

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THE SECONDARY AND ITS KEYS TO FANTASY'S COSMOLOGIES

While there are many sophisticated and convoluted theories that attempt to address the nature of the literature of the fantastic, the manner by which it creates its effects on readers, its techniques, remains largely virgin territory. One technique, setting, has drawn the most attention. Robert H. Boyer and Kenneth J. Zahorski are the primary exponents of place as determinant of the fantastic, and J. R. R. Tolkien's primary and secondary worlds are well known ("On Fairy-Stories" 37-8). A bit more recently, Maria Nikolajeva has postulated "closed" worlds in children's fantasy (36). However, none of these address the myriad forms that fantasy and the fantastic take. Boyer and Zahorski's approach seems nonexplicative and a given -- yes, fantasy occurs in places and these can be high or low. Neither Tolkien nor Nikolajeva addresses the multiple worlds that an individual fantasy can hold, such as C. S. Lewis' Narnia Chronicles or That Hideous Strength and Andre Norton's Witch World. Further, neither of their approaches can confine Megan Lindholm's Seattle and street-people-wizards' numinous world in Wizard of the Pigeons (1987) and Peter S. Beagle's lycanthropy and New York's Upper West Side in "Farrell and Lila the Werewolf" (1971).

Yet, just because setting doesn't seem successful among the old tried-and-true literary techniques does not mean that another might not be. Character appears to be useless when examining protagonists if only because those of heroic fantasy are usually so literarily generic that they're non-distinctive and, anyway, are such dolts that they need help illuminating themselves much less anything else. However, secondary characters and settings do appear to occupy critical places in the establishment of the fantastic's other or alternate worlds. Very frequently, they are the messengers, explicators, and implementers that readers and protagonists need to understand and accept the cosmological natures and epistemological contexts of the literature, or they are essential to the action and for the success of the plot, as fellowships are to heroic quests. Thus, the main characters need to be surrounded by these forces to achieve their own completeness or balance.

Before approaching this in any greater depth, three simple illustrations -two from science fiction and one from fantasy -- may illuminate this. In Woody
Allen's humorous "The Kugelmass Episode," it is the Great Persky who explains
the device that transports the Professor from his mid-life crisis to his liaison with
Emma Bovary with its burlesque effects on the text of Flaubert's novel, and it is
Persky who fixes the "transmission" when the device fails. Without him, there is
no story, but his character, as an artisan, is obviously secondary to Kugelmass' and
Emma's. In Isaac Asimov's *Foundation and Empire*, Hari Seldon's religious
appearances, as a scientific shaman, explicate the relentless psycho-history, and
once it is disrupted by the Mule's mutated power, Ebling Mis, the secondary or

lesser intellect, is nearly the agent of the Mule's triumph (221). And Bayta, the Mule's bane (222), might arguably be considered secondary. Few who have read C. S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength* will forget the scene in which Ransom reveals himself as the Pendragon to the newly-awakened Merlin (274). It can be interpreted as a pivotal epiphany, an epic moment. However, it is ironic since readers have learned Ransom's identity far earlier. Pages before, Denniston mentions it in conversation with Camilla and Jane Studdock (115), and it is repeated again by Camilla when it appears Jane has forgotten (195). While Jane is certainly central to the novel, Denniston and Camilla are not by any measure.

However, to leap from these specific examples to the general fantastic is more difficult. Much of this is because the secondary sometimes just appears to be too powerful to have lesser status. It's easy, for example, to see that, in James Thurber's "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty," all characters are secondary and, with less contrast, that the protagonist or titular wizard and ringmaster in Charles G. Finney's The Circus of Dr. Lao is less important than the young boy or the fabulous creatures and personages that inhabit the midway. The blind artisans in Avram Davidson's The Phoenix and the Mirror or Gollum in Tolkien's The Lord of the Rings are minor. However, their roles are pivotal to the action and its culmination, but their magnitudes are obviously not. However, for a character like Gandalf, the mantel of an attendant lord seems ill-fitting. He is certainly the explicator of the nature and terrors of Middle-earth, whether it be fireworks or the Rings. However, when all hangs in the balance, he is no more than a decoy, and his epic lies somewhere with the Balrog and in his transformation to Gandalf the White -- a story left unsung. Thus, whether it be the result of counting lines or appearances or by the more triumphant achievement of Samwise, Gollum, and Frodo, Gandalf is secondary despite his power and wisdom as shaman. Thus, it is curious that so much skill and ability is relegated to lesser status.

Regardless of these three examples, such a thesis requires a far greater survey to even begin to be credible.

Among the saddest, if not the most pathetic, of secondary characters are the artisans. Doomed to be the hands of others' imaginations, they labor in relative obscurity producing the talismans that are often at the centers of fantastic quests or tasks. Consider Yama, the creator of all the gods' weapons and marvels in Roger Zelazny's Lord of Light. He is the eternal, pimply-faced nerd despite the bodies he assumes. Likewise, Sauron tricks the Elves into making the Rings of Power, and the crippled Ged, in Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Wizard of Earthsea*, suffers as a plodding laborer after he releases his shadow (70). In an anonymity that is often so severe that they are not in the work at all, these artisans suffer the blue-color derision of the elite and the powerful. Their skills and dexterity are overshadowed by the fabulous, intuitive, and supernatural. They exist beyond the pale, below the

salt. In fact, when Brian Attebery discusses A. J. Greimas' "actant" -- a character who acts -- versus Robert Scholes' content character, who is much more interesting for content (73), artisans don't even make the cast list. They are frequently offstage in an *a priori* world, having supplied the talismans that any player may use. Thus, the ancients in Talbot Mundy's *Jimgrim* never see Dorje's maimed use of their discoveries, Tolkien's Elves watch helplessly as Sauron perverts their creations for his own use, and Edmund Cordery, in Brian Stableford's *Empire of Fear*, dies ignorant of his own scientific success in transferring his plague to the vampires (78).

Another archetypal character who enjoys far more limelight than the artisan, but who also is often a tool to the more immediate quests, central plots, and narratives is the shaman. Amid the infantile and simplistic psychomachia that are central to much of fantasy's plots and themes, shamans are the ideal champions of health, life, fertility, and the world of light and the ideal foes of disease, death, sterility, and the world of darkness (Eliade, *Myths* 2:280; Eliade, *Shamanism* 508-9). Their powers revel and function in ". . . the fabulous world of the gods and magicians, the world in which *everything seems possible*, where the dead return to life and the living die only to live again, where one can disappear and reappear instantaneously, where the "laws of nature" are abolished, and a certain superhuman "freedom" is exemplified and made dazzlingly *present*" (Eliade, *Shamanism* 511).

However, even though fantasy's troubled and threatened communities quickly embrace male or female shamans and other supernatural saviors in times of great stress and conflict, the shamans' very natures make them uncomfortable allies who stretch social conformity to its extreme limits. This is because shamans are not social beings; they are crisis' creatures. They do not incorporate; they are saturated with too much individualism. Shamans do not relate to the whole and cannot integrate with or return to a safe and sane social group. Their vocation is, by its very nature, asocial and is "independent of any human compulsion or agency" (Henderson 72). For example, C. S. Lewis' Pendragon (*That Hideous Strength*) lives apart from the world and maintains greater-than-normal, transcendent ethics, and Tanith Lee's Vazkor is accountable only to his supernatural mother-lover, Uastis, at the end of Quest for the White Witch (316-7). Once the victory is won, the shamans are not tame enough to be good citizens. Power must become intelligible and be returned to human agencies. It is as if, having been insecure and frightened, there is a purposeful need to reaffirm, reassure, and re-establish mortal morale. The reminders of perils and vulnerabilities, both the heinous and the virtuous ones, must be banished. Thus, the shamans have no place in the goodness they have been so pivotal in creating.

It happens, then, in many fantasies, that when the monsters are gone, natural

order restored, and there are general celebrations for the conquering heroes, shamans leave or are exiled. As action resolves itself, much in the manner of Northrop Frye's Comedic (Anatomy 163-86) or Romantic (Anatomy 186-206) mythos, the once-necessary shaman is a discomfort to stable, planter society (Campbell, Primitive 231, 241; Eliade, Flight 158-9). This occurs even though fantasy's shamans are generally calmer and more poised figures than society's and folklore's ecstatic maniacs. None-the-less, once the shamans' parts of fantasy's fights against chaos are over, they are pronounced useless. The examples of this in modern fantasy are legion. Gandalf leaves for the West, along with other magical characters, at the dawning of the "Third Age" (Tolkien, Return 301-11). Merlin -whether he be in Medieval French romance, T. H. White's Once and Future King, or Robert Nye's bizarre Merlin -- is frequently exiled to some prison. Charles Williams' Prestor John, in War in Heaven, appears, heals and restores life, and disappears (253-5). Roger Zelazny's Sam (Lord of Light 256), Ursula K. Le Guin's Ged (The Farthest Shore 222-3), and Patricia Wrightson's Wirrun (Journey Behind the Wind 178) all vanish into conflicting myths and folk tales.

Sometimes the departure of the shaman is particularly poignant, for a number of times this figure serves as a mentor who does much to serve both the protagonist and the reader by sharing wisdom and insight, as do Gandalf and Merlin. For example, and as Christine Brooke-Rose observes, Gandalf is the "great explainer" (237). These characters are often the embodiment of the Alternate world's cosmology and epistemology, and their role, however relentless or unwelcome, is to share. Sometimes too the character is a guide whose wisdom may be the necessary pragmatism that Chessie supplies the young princess in her stages of life in The Prince of Morning Bells. These characters are the tools of more subtle authors for whom these guides (Frye, "Varieties" 26), wisdom figures, and shamans deliver soliloquy-like speeches or lessons to share meanings with, educate, and inform readers and other characters. C. S. Lewis, in Narnia Chronicles (1950-56) and That Hideous Strength (1945), has Aslan interact with the children and the Pendragon with Mark Studdock, respectively, to accomplish this. In Susan Cooper's The Dark Is Rising series (1965-77), Will Stanton is tutored by his Uncle Merriman, actually Merlin, as Will discovers he is the last born in a series of sorcerers, the "Old Ones." In contrast, there are, of course, authors whose technique of sharing information is not character related. Among the most heavy handed is the intrusive narrator. This is at its most extreme in formulaic fiction. like Manly Wade Wellman's Silver John series or the latest incarnation in Michael Moorcock's Elric of Melniboné series (1963-), The Revenge of the Rose (1991). Within all of this, fantasy literature explicitly or implicitly forces its allegorical burden of meaning and exegesis, frequently via secondary characters, to compensate for readers' lack of referentiality. It's as if zero-based accounting has

metamorphosed into zero-based awareness and thinking. While intrusion may make for clarity, it is also far clumsier than traditional allegory once was. An unnervingly obvious example of this is Michael Swanwick's "The Dragon Line." In this cyberpunk update of the Arthurian legend, not only does Swanwick feel the need to recapitulate the traditional and oft-told natures of Camelot (427) and the conflict between Arthur and Modred (426-7, 428, 434) but also the deplorable state of the world's ecology (430, 432-3).

Furthermore, and as mentioned earlier via Denniston and Camilla in *That Hideous Strength*, such wisdom figures need not even be the powerful and awe inspiring. They can also come from the league of wise or helpful servants as epitomized by Mosca in Ben Jonson's *Volpone* and Samwise in Tolkien's Lord of the Rings and as denigrated by the perverse Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello*. Here too, the traditional fool frequently serves as a source of wisdom and knowledge. The most delightful example of this is the seemingly mad butterfly in Peter Beagle's *The Last Unicorn*. He misdirects, rhymes, puns, and sings -- all motion, whim, and impulse -- before his madness vanishes for a moment, and he warns the Unicorn of the dread foes who await her. Then, unlike the solemn shaman and as if embarrassed, he quickly recants his insight and relapses into folly -- achieving the balance between wisdom and foolishness that is part of the fool's traditional role. Thus, the fool (Welsford 180, 317), shaman, and sometimes even wisdom figure are enemies of social order, the unthinking didactic (bias), and rigidity. None-theless, for a time, their contributions are invaluable to protagonist and reader.

All of these influential characters are obvious virtuous, regardless of their relative fame and visibility. However, few have the dark glamour and notoriety of fantasy's antagonists, the dark versions of the admirable shaman and wisdom figure. This dark breed constantly disrupts the balance and closed systems that the virtuous labor so mightily to restore. These Others, often the Jungian Shadow, are the agents of the imbalance and conflict that give the majority of fantasy its plots and shapes and give purpose to most protagonists. They demonstrate that creative action appears to be anathema. It is as if Freud's edict that only an unsatisfied person "phantasies" and that "every single phantasy is the fulfillment of a wish, a correction of an unsatisfying reality" (9:146) is an unbreakable law. In this, fantasy links very strongly to horror literature. In horror, venturing into the unknown without just cause is always the impetus for vile punishment. Just as Mary Shelley's Dr. Frankenstein and Gore Vidal's Kelly learn that nature expects conformity, so too readers are assailed further by creation-as-deviance in Katherine Dunn's Geek Love, in which carnival owners use drugs, insecticides, and radioisotopes to bear freaks, and in Clive Barker's The Great and Secret Show, in which a functionary in the dead-letter office becomes godlike and threatens to pollute the archetypal pool of the imagination. In all these cases, failure to

recognize an omnipotent order yields the Faustian fall, the crime of the magician who separates himself from the general run of humanity and social order to seek the devil (Cavendish 18). Both fantasy and horror reject the individual will; in the former, it is irrelevant to greater good; in the latter, it is crushed by irresistible evil. In both cases, it has no place. This is because, in its resolutions, most fantasy is not a home for the self-discovery that comes from being alone (Storr 21); it is the celebration of the adherence to an order greater than the self. The need to belong to a larger community (Storr 13) supersedes all.

To more fully understand this, Anthony Storr's *Solitude: A Return to Self* is again helpful: "The creative person is constantly seeking to discover himself, to remodel his own identity, and to find meaning in the universe through what he creates" (xiv). Obviously, fantasy's good and great do not "remodel" anything; their cosmology is fixed and mandated. The opposition, eccentric characters all, is evil because it does seek to shape contrary orders from its own truths. This is not a laudable or admirable quality. Fantasy is dominated by those mythic and mythopoeic forces that desire tranquillity, not change, not even creative change as Sauron demonstrates in the Lord of the Rings. Thus, again, a secondary character is finally ephemeral and disposable.

While antagonists may be the darkest of the fantastic's secondary characters and its most intriguing for their deviation into creative, if fell, change, places are obviously the most curious. However, places have a long tradition of being more influential that simple settings or locations in literature. A classic example is the influence that Castle Gormenghast holds over its seventy-seven lord, Titus, in Mervyn Peake's trilogy (*Titus Groan* 139). A more obvious case is the *locus* amoenus. It is geomorphological concept, in which topology or setting take on powers and attributes that are normally assigned to characters. Thus, as the sealing of the love grotto by the church in Gottfried von Strassburg's Tristan and Isold illustrates, such places were thought to have both positive and negative power over the actions and emotions of human beings. Utopias are further examples in which ideal places influence characters through their special atmospheres. In the modern era, James Hilton's Lost Horizon (1933) and its movie versions (1937, 1978) represent the most well-known uses of the *locus amoenus*. The floating islands in the first two volumes of C. S. Lewis' Space Trilogy (1938-45) and Aslan's land in the Narnia Chronicles (1950-56) are further examples. More utopian versions occur in Eden Phillpotts' The Lavender Dragon (1923), in promises of the "Islands of the Blest" at the end of Thomas Burnett Swann's Minotaur Trilogy (1966-71) and in the Western Isles in The Lord of the Rings Trilogy. Yet, in curious juxtaposition to the utopian ideal, these places are just as deadly as the evil character. The garden that gives only pleasure is no place for heroes who must be about their business. It is as deeply dangerous as the coils of the serpent or the

time-altering hollow hills of the Celtic fairies. Its languid, dreamy state is misdirection personified; it is idleness and sloth, not purpose or success. It is closure. As Frye points out, the seed (the hero) must be uprooted by the quest to achieve the experience it requires (Anatomy 205). The energy and achievement that follow are prime products of the felix culpa, the Renaissance perspective that views the Fall as the most important step on the way to humanity. In the Fallen World, the hero cannot return to Eden. To do so would be to reject the humanity that the hero strives so mightily to affirm. Interestingly, such places produce states of being that the protagonists may be seduced by or they may just accept, often mistakenly. Heroes that fall to gardens may be weak or tired or whatever, but they are rarely willing. Nancy Kress' princess accepts marital stasis midway through The Prince of Morning Bells. Her quest for the "Heart of the Word" is postponed by her marriage to an oafish "jousting jock," as well as by other static activities, and is resumed only in middle age following her husband's death. Her companion, Chessie, a sarcastic prince-turned-into-Labrador-retriever, points out the dangers of such innocent visions of idyllic worlds and preoccupations when he describes the third and most subtle danger of the quest: "Gyve from the Middle English word for fetters or to fetter; origin unknown. Enchainment. Cloistering. Caesura. Captivity. Arrestment" (120). Heroes are supposed to be single-minded. There is no room for rest. Here, of course, is a combination of the elements discussed in this paper since Chessie is also the pragmatic guide to whom the princess turns after her husband dies and in her maturity to resume her quest.

Thus, in modern fantasy and, perhaps, throughout world literature, the perfect place can be the worst place. Be it good or evil, location can exercise a powerful, anthropomorphic influence over protagonists.

There are three reasons to justify the importance of the secondary. The first and most obvious is that readers tend not to identify with the extremely learned, skilled, magical, or evil. Spock may be intriguing, but it is "Bones" and Kirk who draw empathy. A curious variation on this is that as learned as Van Helsing is in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, he is both the explicator and the identifier for the reader primarily because of the vampire's extraordinary otherness. Generally, the character coming of age, becoming, seeking the successful quest, etc. is the one readers take to heart.

Second, much of the revelation of the nature of the fantasy realm comes through the educations of or the discoveries by the protagonist. For example, readers learn of Earthsea through Ged's tutors, friends, and even the antagonistic dragon. The main characters' achievements of balance, completion, and triumph are the shared fictive experience; the gifts and wisdom of the secondary ones are usually bestowed or suffered. And while the latter is important, it is not as easily welcomed as what is earned nor is it as immediate and experiential.

Third, and last, the interaction and interchange among main characters, secondary ones, and objects is simply the stuff of which revelatory and active fiction is made. With it, both inner and outer voyages can be made that have substance and moment. It is what keeps the narrative open while the action is in process, and once the tale is done and balance and restoration achieved, it is why many of the secondary and kinetic elements must leave while both readers and heroes celebrate.

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THOMAS BURNETT SWANN'S NIXIES: PAIN AND PLEASURE

Readers of Thomas Burnett Swann's fantasies have long made note of his ability to bring mythology to life through his many classical and ancient settings. Swann's mythological settings are, however, backdrops to his characters, and these characters are probably more important in assessing his contribution to twentieth-century fantasy. Other authors have returned to Crete, Greece, and Britain with equal, if not greater success, but few authors, if any, have added such extraordinary populations of human and beast characters. Swann's major characters are distinctively in harmony with nature, and they are whimsical and sensual in their pursuits of the joyous *carpe diem* that fills the novels and short stories. His settings may make readers believe that they are seeing worlds of wonder and magic, but it is the characters that make the readers believe that these settings are important and worth occupying.

Much has been made of the gentleness and innocence of Swann's characters. They care about each other, and both their passing and intimate relationships are marked by grace, harmony, and generosity. Moreover, they disregard everything except true character and goodness in their gatherings of friends, comrades, and lovers. In their sexual encounters, they have a spontaneity and an amorality that is charming and completely sincere. Robert A. Collins describes this accurately in the only lengthy study of Swann's life and writing, *Thomas Burnett Swann: A Brief Critical Biography and Annotated Bibliography:*

Swann's characters usually behave with grace and restraint. And yet sex is important, a major motivation in every novel, sometimes paramount. And oddly, freedom to follow one's desires, without regard for the restrictions of social or legal institutions, is a main theme in all of them. What misleads the lusty is the disarming *simplicity* with which Swann's characters, human and prehuman, pursue their desires. Swann's treatment of sex embodies an ideal, a universal freedom to love, without prurience.¹

Yet to expect that Swann has created a series of Edens without serpents, countries of blissful utopian nirvana, would be a grave error. The realms of Swann are also filled with insidious and brutal dangers. In this, his worlds are much like those of epic and romance, in which a simple stroll through the woods can be the occasion for the appearance of poisonous and deadly threats, easily capable of playfully maiming before bestowing the delightful release of death. This is, in part, because Swann's environments are governed by gods, not God, and this anthropomorphic governance will deal pain as freely as pleasure. Thus, while

Swann's stress on innocence allows deep virtue, it also opens the doors to the most deceitful of vices, vices that require that the main characters have strength as well as gentleness.

Intriguingly, and almost with exception, the characters that embody the greatest virtues and vices are women. They are all sexually active or, at least, interested: for some, this amorousness is a gift to be bestowed; for others, it is a weapon to be wielded. Carl Jung, in *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, offers a definition that is a productive tool for understanding Swann's females:

The nixie is an even more instinctive version of a magical feminine being whom I call the *anima*. She can also be a siren, *melusina* (mermaid), wood-nymph, Grace, or Erlking's daughter, or a lamia or succubus, who infatuates young men and sucks the life out of them. What is more, these beings were as much dreaded as adored, so that their rather peculiar erotic charms were only one of their characteristics. Man's consciousness was then far simpler, and his possession of it absurdly small. An unlimited amount of what we now feel to be an integral part of our psychic being disports itself merrily for the primitive in projections ranging far and wide.²

The aptness of Jung's definition is striking, for not only are Swann's females erotic but they are also frequently dryads, water sprites, bee women, harpies, and sphinxes as well as humans. Swann's use of an archetype is not too surprising. His studies of and sympathy with antiquity and humanity, as they combined with his own obvious sensitivity, would be expected to produce an awareness of basic patterns of human belief and behavior. Swann, himself, noted this in a letter to Gerald Page:

I have an overpowering sense of having known such beings [his characters]; . . . images and even whole characters flicker into my mind and it's as if some racial memory were speaking through me.³

It should be noted, before preceding too far with Swann's nixies, that the kind of awesome, erotic power that this archetypal figure has is not restricted only to the evil females, as it is, for example, in Samuel Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" and John Keats' "Lamia." The nixie is similar to the Freudian "Madonna-Whore," and Swann's liberated milieus demand that his virtuous females, his "madonnas," are also sexually powerful and capable of being destructive. Amid his psychomachias, virtue must have the power to defeat evil although the margin of victory is often

very fine, and on one occasion, at least, good's final victory can best be termed pyrrhic.

A sampling of Swann's fantasies graphically reveals the powerful edenic and demonic females who are typical of almost all of his works. The Last Minotaur Trilogy - Cry Silver Bells (DAW, 1977; rpt. Garland, 1983), The Forest of Forever (Ace, 1971; rpt. Garland, 1983), and The Day of the Minotaur (Ace, 1966; rpt. Garland, 1983)⁵ – features as one of its sustained, sometimes central, characters Zoe the Dryad (who narrates the first two volumes in the reading order, which is the reverse of the publication order). Zoe is the protector of and adviser to Eunostes, the last Minotaur, in his various adventures, amorous and otherwise. She is the Country of the Beasts' healer and, throughout the trilogy, is referred to as an Earth Mother. She is the voice of reason amid the Beast-Folks' often exuberant and irrational reactions to challenges and threats. For example, in Cry Silver Bells, it is Zoe who concocts the plan by which Silver Bells the Minotaur, Hora the professional whore, and Lordon the Thief (Hora's brother) are saved from the Cretan "Bull Games." She has disguised herself as a Nubian queen and, at the critical moment when the Prince of Crete is deciding the three's fate, Zoe summons the perfumed memories she and the prince had enjoyed the night before to sway his judgment (163).

More generally and throughout the Minotaur Trilogy, Zoe must combat nixies and cope with nixie-like characters who threaten the sanctity and happiness of her world and her friends. In Cry Silver Bells, the foes are the sphinxes, and Swann's description of them makes it appear as if he and Jung were working in collaboration: The sphinx is "... canny and cruel. There is something of woman distorted in each of them, and the Sphinx . . . can metamorphose herself into human form, and then she is known as a lamia, and she lures a man in order to drink his blood" (7). The sphinx-lamia-nixie is intertwined throughout the narrative of Cry Silver Bells: one has killed Hora and Lordon's parents, a second is Silver Bells' opponent in the Bull Games, and a third has been there since the beginning, unknown to all. This third sphinx had been Silver Bells' revered and well-mourned wife, Alyssum. With the help of the evil Tritons, Alyssum had arrived in the Country of the Beasts as the supposed last survivor of a naval battle. She captured Silver Bells' heart and gained the confidence and affection of all the Beast-Folk. Like Shakespeare's Iago, this sphinx finds Silver Bells' nobility an abomination, and fearful for her life, she has chosen to work insidiously in her lamia form rather than kill Silver Bells outright and chance her own death at the hands of his friends. As fate would have it, she is captured and killed in the Bull Games before the novel begins (188-89). However, at the Beast-Folks' moment of triumph at the end of the novel, the souls of Alyssum and the sphinx slain by Silver Bells in the games return in the form of saffron butterflies and poison the noble

minotaur, leaving his son, Eunostos, as the last minotaur and leaving the Beast-Folk with a bitter victory.

In the second book in the trilogy, *The Forest of Forever*, Zoe must cope with another of Eunostos' many infatuations, this one with the dryad Kora. Kora does not have the evil intentions of the Jungian nixie, but as Zoe points out Kora "was cursed with beauty as some women are cursed with ugliness," (6) and she is "utterly artless and therefore supremely artful" (18). She is also, at the age of eighteen, the oldest virgin in the Country of the Beasts (4). Eunostos, who was also in love with Hora in *Cry Silver Bells* (61), writes poems to Kora, and the nature of his affection shows her nixie-like qualities:

It was not a single attribute, however, which caught Eunostos's eye: it was an aura of remoteness, of inviolability. She was like an unexplored cave or a silent underground river: secret and alluring and a little frightening (16).

Kora accepts Eunostos' plea for marriage after he rescues her and Zoe from the Bee-People, but she quickly disappoints him. She has long dreamed of marvelous cities (28) and a young prince (29), and when her dream staggers into the wood wounded, she forgets Eunostos; marries the now-healed prince, Aeacus; and bears him two children (who return in *The Day of The Minotaur*). When he leaves with the two children to return to his and their rightful places as royalty in the city, Kora kills herself by setting fire to her tree. While Eunostos' grief is great as the result of Kora's ill-conceived dreams, his heartbreak is of minor importance compared to the near tragedy caused by the powerful evil of the novel's pure nixie, Saffron, Queen of the Thriae (the Bee-People).

Arriving in the Country of the Beasts with her swarm, Safron is immediately drawn to Eunostos' virility. When she first peeks at him through the foliage, Zoe is quick to distract the young minotaur lest he look into the "naked face of lust" (12). Saffron kidnaps Kora and Zoe to coerces Eunostos into playing stud. The reader is given ample opportunity to understand what she has in mind. Zoe observes that, even though Saffron is "as beautiful as a phoenix," "what was littleness in her body was pettiness in her soul" (48). And when Zoe visits Saffron in the hive and before Saffron gives Zoe a harmless looking, vampiric pet, a strige (52-54), to affect her capture, the Bee Queen, herself, describes her mating ritual:

Our mating is somewhat turbulent. The drone is generally – and forgive my coarseness, but then I can't shock *you*, can I? – gutted (55).

Her description is more graphically described in the actual act, which takes place in Eunostos' home:

She spat in his face. She became a hybrid of hybrids – griffin, hydra, chimera – and her body entwined him like a python, her arms constricted like tentacles, her thighs resembled a snapping sea turtle (62).

Indignant that the strong young minotaur has not remained passive like a drone and has refused to allow her to rip him to pieces (63), Saffron returns to the hive. Later, when Eunostos comes to rescue Zoe and Kora from the hive, Zoe illustrates how Swann's virtuous females can be just as savage as the evil ones:

... I [Zoe] was a wolf whose cub has been caught in a hunter's net. I was the whale whose calf is threatened by sharks. I was the Mother Earth bereft of her young. I raged, I thundered . . . (72).

In the final book of the trilogy, *The Day of the Minotaur*, Eunostos is again in love, and another Bee-Queen threatens the County of the Beasts. Thea and Icarus, the children of Kora and Aeacus from *The Forest of Forever*, return and are the focus of a war that dooms the forest and forces the Beast-Folk to sail to the Isles of the Blest at the end of the novel. This time the Bee-Queen, Amber, craves the young Icarus. Icarus, intrigued by the significant charms of even an aged Zoe, is captured by Amber on his way to learn the arts of love in Zoe's tree. His initial reaction to Amber shows the sexual power of this nixie:

A winged lilly she was, with catlike, sinuous grace; Scarcely a girl at all except for the tightness she brought to his throat and the lizard with fiery feet she lashed across his limbs (87).

Icarus's ignorance of Amber's ugly intent and nature is obviously more a product of her supernatural eroticism than of the young swain's innocence and lust. Those characters she has not beguiled see her very clearly. Eunostos later observes that "There was something loathsome and predatory about her; or worse scavenging" (91). She is transparent even to the gluttonous Pandia (one of the childlike Bears of Artemis), who is usually too preoccupied with food to notice much of anything. He warns: "She is a wicked woman. I can tell by the way she darts her tongue" (88). Fortunately, Eunostos interrupts their tryst and draws the narcotic she has used to disable Icarus from the boy's lungs with his own breath. Tragically, the spurned and frustrated Amber allies herself with an Achaean army, which destroys the Country of the Beasts before it is defeated.

Thea, beloved of Eunostos, returns with her brother to aid her human kin against invasion. As the "Beast Princess" with her pointed ears and slanted, golden eyes, she is an awesome force in the human victory. However, it appears for a time that she, like the last minotaur's other loves, is doomed to fulfill his fear that he "would love her to my despair and perhaps destruction" (106). And there is no

question that Thea is a powerful and courageous female. Delicate, but with the strength of a murex (12), it was she who dissuaded Ajax's attempted rape by putting a hairpin in a very significant part of his anatomy (32). However, for once the last minotaur's love finds fulfillment, and Thea joins him in his journey to the Isles of the Blest (158-59).

The Weirwoods (Ace 1967) continues Swann's preoccupation with nixies, but also introduces a new element. Tanaquil, the dreamy daughter of a soldier and noble, is given Vel, a young male water sprite taken from the weirwoods by her father (a violation of an ancient treaty between humans and beasts). Her awakening sexuality initially responds to the sprite in much the same way that the innocent men have responded to the powerful females:

There was something child-like about his narrow shoulders and slender flanks, and yet at the same time sexual. He made her think of the blatantly phallic Fauns which, young, grinning, sculptured in bronze, supported the tables in the triclinium or dining room (17).

Vel the Sprite is tormented by his captivity, and his rescue by Vegoria, a witch and water sprite, with the help of a wandering minstral, Arnth, becomes the center of the first two-thirds of the novel. Arnth is helpless before Vegoria's charms, and after Vel's bitterness leads to the unintended destruction of the entire town (84), Tanaquil's love for Arnth must remain frustrated. Swann's description of Vegoria leaves little doubt why Arnth chooses as he does:

... she looked about fifteen: a singularly knowing fifteen. Her body had the svelte lines of an otter, and her breasts were hard and exquisitely tipped with strawberry-colored nipples. Though her feet were webbed like Vel's, she walked soundlessly, and her eyes, though yellow and slanted, were those of a playful kitten instead of a cat. She was not human, of course, but what she lacked in humanity, she more that compensated for in unabashed and glowing animality. . . . her smile . . . totally lacked innocence but also [it lacked] guile and coyness (38-39).

However, the Builder of the World has left all sprites heartless and unfinished (45, 53), but Arnth's love has awakened something like a heart in her, and it brings her a bittersweet mortality and causes her death (121-22). Only after Vegoria's death can Arnth yield to Tanaquil's more human love (124-25).

In *The Not-World* (DAW 1975), Swann's humorous burlesque of the Brownings and Thomas Chatterton, the reader meets Dierdre, a crippled, thirty-year-old, virgin novelist who wishes she were a nixie, and Arachne, a witch who

glories in being one. Dierdre finds the earthy sailor Dylan a constant source of erotic compliments and titillation. She is drawn to the sexual power of the nixie archetype when he calls her a red-blooded woman (12), alludes to her many lovers and calls her a moll (15), and names their hot-air balloon the "Celestial Moll." When they are innocently sleeping in a ruin in the Not-World after their horses have bolted, she hopes her rumpled appearance will let her "be taken for a trysting wench" (24). At the end of the novel, when Dylan is threatened by Arachne, the deadly nixie, she forgets her infirmity, and as Dylan stands helpless trying to hold his pants up, she aggressively says, "Bitch, what have you done to my man?" (137) and attacks violently. Dierdre has found her natural self and fulfills the foreshadowing early in the novel when her portrait in the Royal Museum was identified as "The Green Lady" (23).

The real nixie in the novel and Swann's pastiche of Edmund Spenser's Duessa is Arachne Dobbin. When Dylan was a callow youth, she drew him to her with a clay image and seduced him. A witch and a widow, she has no sense of guilt (44) and doesn't recognize the existence of sin (45). When Dylan's father exposes her as a witch and she is condemned to burn, the lush widow, her fox tail fully visible, curses Dylan for his father's action: "What I have taught you will make you forever displeasured with other women" (47). Her curse has held, but Dierdre's promise offers Dylan hope for relief. Unfortunately, Arachne returns as a very substantial shade to the two when they sleep in the Not-World's Celtic forest:

... she had followed him into the wildest wilderness and come without shame ..., reeking of the animal scent of grass and musk (85), ... eyes glittering with seven deadly sins (133-34).

Arachne has seduced the devil and been allowed to return to Earth to do his work (144), and while she attempts to seduce Dylan, she sends an incuba to Dierdra to accomplish the same purpose (81-82, 90). However, the two lovers repulse her and her sending, and in their final confrontation, Arachne is revealed to be a hag, made attractive only by artfully padded and corseted clothes.

Finally, in *The Minikins of Yam* (DAW 1976), Swann creates his most outrageous nixie-like figure in Immortelle, a golden minikin from the inaccessible isle of Sappharine. She is a trained whore but hopes soon for promotion to courtesan (49), both honored pursuits in her land. In contrast to the young pharaoh's sister and future wife, who "Hathor had somehow forgotten to give . . . breasts" (44) and who plots her brother's assassination (45-46), Immortelle knows how "to tell the truth without reproach" (109). She joins with the young pharaoh, Pepy II, and his soldier friend to save Egypt from a drought brought on by Pepy's dead mother, a succubus who was rejected by his father and who in spirit form

hopes to draw her son to the heart of the trouble so she can see him again. Immortelle has blue innocent eyes, flaming upswept hair, and

Breasts like Apples of Love. Nipples redder than jasper and winking twin temptations through the cloth [of her gown] (36).

And the face, the form! They needed no ornaments but, adorned with many, managed not to be overwhelmed; managed to draw attention first to themselves and only then to the ornaments (32).

Is it any surprise that she bedazzles all the men in the novel? She even manages to inspire the ancient and usually somnambular god Nilus to remark: "You're a pretty little piece. Spunky too" (115).

The archetypal nixie is a major aspect of almost all of Swann's fantasies (see note 4), and its essential approach-avoidance dynamism is a major cause of the dramatic tension that makes his works exciting reading. The nixie is a primary part of complex interactions in Swann's novels that produce a throbbing primordial tone and emotion that strip humanity of its civilized veneer and focus attention on the peculiarly human preoccupations with loyalty, love, compassion, and eroticism. Most significantly for a consideration of Swann's artistic achievement, his amoral worlds and gentle characterizations show his modification of the Jungian archetypal nixie. His particular view allows the nixie to function for good as well as evil, a shift that identifies him as one of the rare, truly mythopoeic authors who can "touch and exhilarate centers of life beyond the reach of the vocabularies of reason and coercion."

NOTES

¹Robert A. Collins, *Thomas Burnett Swann: A Brief Critical Biography and Annotated Bibliography* (Boca Raton, FL: The Thomas Burnett Swann Fund, 1979). 11.

²C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed., trans. R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1968). 25.

³Jerry Page, "Thomas Burnett Swann," Lore 104 (February 1966), 37, as

cited by Collins, p. 1.

⁴In addition to the representative samples discussed, other examples of powerful women in Swann' fiction are as follows: Rahab in Moondust; Vashti in "Vashti"; Stella in *Will-o-the-Wisp*; Mellonia, Volumna, Electra, and Dido in the Aeneas Trilogy (*Queens Walk in the Dusk, Lady of the Bees*, and *Green Phoenix*); Daphne in "The Murex"; Ruth and Lady Mary in "The Manor of Roses"; Ahinoan

in *How the Mighty Are Fallen*; Maria in "The Night of the Unicorn"; and Tutelina and Stella/Ashtoreth in *The Gods Abide*.

⁵Page citations are to the first editions as mentioned and are included in the text.

⁶Joseph Campbell's definition of myth from *The Masks of God: Creative Mythology* (1968; rpt. New York: Penguin, 1976). 649.

THE FEMIVORE: AN UNDISCOVERED ARCHETYPE!

With Thanks to Robert A. Collins. Dear and Never-Forgotten Friend; though him, Thomas Burnett Swann's Nixies inspired this discovery

... Nothing is surer than that we [men] will no longer desire them [women], for one does not desire what one possesses.

Giovanni Giacomo Casanova de Seingalt (1725-98)

Playboy, buck, stud, Don Juan, rake, wolf, rogue, Lothario, Bluebeard, roué, *incubus*, satyr, hunk, "the Fonz," romeo, babe, lady killer, Casanova -- all are names and terms that have been used to describe the sexually active, multiple-partnered male. Curiously, even though such figures have received specific scholarly attention and social admiration throughout the ages, the single entity they mirror has never been specifically identified or labeled. This is particularly odd since, despite the extensive contemporary feminist preoccupation with the modern destructive male, the figure is actually an ancient, primordial entity and a pervasive archetype.

Sherri S. Tepper in her contemporary horror novel, *The Bones*, provides an apt and universal label for this archetype, the "femivore" (222). For Tepper's protagonist, Marie, he "... was simply too good-looking by far, improbably good-looking. He broadcast a kind of fatal fascination. Like Count Dracula. The kind of man who eats women for breakfast -- and lunch and dinner'" (221-2).

The femivore's essential nature is that he infatuates and seduces women and leaves them bereft of spiritual and often physical life. He sucks them dry, dooming them to perpetual states of waiting. He has ever been the Dionysian swashbuckler, beguiling and faithless. Most often, in literature and mythology, he escapes consequences and responsibilities and is allowed to remain a memorable and ephemeral treasure whose supernatural prowess defies mere mortals. His characteristic departure is often shrouded in mystery (or the story just ends). Sometimes his real appearance is concealed by simple disguises, such as the masked lover. In more supernatural moments, he is a shapeshifter (metamorph) as is Zeus with Leda and Danaë. In all cases, he is unbearably independent (Jung 25) and does not linger to concern himself with the futures of the ravished females he leaves behind.

Such a creature, of course, makes any sense of love and *eros* inconsequential. The femivore's concerns are immediate and lustful. He doesn't nurture. Thus, he debilitates any sense of past or future. He makes the most incredible things believable, even Sleeping Beauty's kiss. As such, he violates women's traditional fantasies of security, social and financial acceptance and stability, and marriage to the Father Reborn. He summons to full, passionate life the clay that, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, should be somnolent to insure

salvation. Bram Dijkstra, even though he is speaking from the decidedly masculine milieu of the Fin-de-Siècle cle in *Idols of Perversity*, nonetheless captures the diabolical content here: The phallus, the snake, "... with its uncontrollable capacity to spring forward, was indeed the satanic companion to the woman whose presence caused it to uncoil" (305).

Within the more modern, elevated concept of self-actualization, the femivore is the male who dooms the female to a secondary, dormant life in which she exists simply as the waiting explosive for blazes of inconsequential romance, the state Madonna Kolbenschlag identifies so well through her descriptions of the "formula female" and the "other-oriented female" in *Kiss Sleeping-Beauty Good-Bye:*Breaking the Spell of Feminine Myths and Models. Within the carnal present the femivore creates, his pagan lure is irresistible, and he is a creature of fantasy at its most extreme, both immature and foolish.

From this definition, it would be easy enough to label the femivore as misogynist and wastrel: indifferent to humanity in women, insensitive and irresponsible to all but himself. He might slide smoothly into the concept of intercourse as a punishing tool to which men subject women, as Andrea Dworkin indicates in her novel Fire and Ice and nonfiction work Intercourse. At worst, literary types like the vampire, the demon lover (incubus), and Svengali figure come to mind, destructive in their possessiveness, diabolically and seminally evil. As such, the purposeful femivore is the ugly inversion of the father (Frye's false father [199]) who must discard his daughters and who remains ever out of reach, poisoning all future encounters. This is, of course, the curse of Terisa's father in Stephen R. Donaldson's *The Mirror of Her Dreams* and *A Man Rides Through*. Mordant's Need. In Western European culture, the penultimate illustration of this occurs in Eden. It is sadly indicative of masculine-dominated perceptions that, for centuries, no one seems to have cared that Eve is seduced first by a masculine numen, Lucifer/Satan; only then does Adam fall victim to her "feminine wiles." One of history's cruelest stupidities is that the blatant scapegoating of the first step has been ignored. Other examples of the rampaging male echo throughout literature, popular culture, and folklore: the callousness of the seducers in Samuel Richardson's Pamela and Nathaniel Hawthorne's The Scarlet Letter, the destructiveness in The Thousand Nights and One Night and of Bluebeard, and the indifference in Geoffrey Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale" and the films Gone with the Wind, Looking for Mr. Goodbar, and American Gigolo.

However, unlike his female counterparts, the nixie (Jung 25) and the Maenad, and the obvious male villains (i.e., the vampire), the femivore is rarely presented or perceived as evil, especially by those he victimizes and those who chronicle and relish his conquests. As such, he is deceptive. In fact, he is a prime example of incarnate social fantasy and its duality. Objectively, he is a fleeting

parasite who should be anathema to all women. Yet, even among the intelligent and enlightened, he is the shaman of swoons and utter devotion, much like Michael Valentine Smith in Robert A. Heinlein's *Stranger in a Strange Land*. He is misconceived as mischievous, even non-threateningly boyish. His charm is, in part, like the fauns', those playful demigods who flip skirts and pinch bottoms. Deeply insidious, if not fully disguised by the cloak of socialized fantasy, the femivore is not relevant to the battles between the sexes upon which Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar focus ("Sex Wars . . ." passim; *No Man's* passim). No, between the ever-adolescent femivore and his welcoming female, there is no struggle, only submission, in their willing bondings. This is no game of Ombre, mock or otherwise. Indeed, the femivore as archetype and social role model has lead numerous adolescent males through the rite of passage of casual sex (sport fucking) -- the "find 'em, feel 'em, fuck 'em, forget 'em" pattern. He is what C. G. Jung calls the "original Man," the one-sided sexual being (Jung 71) who is all *animus* and no *anima*.

More expansively, the dreams, behaviors, and rites of passage of misguided and excessively socialized women ("Wendys") and ever-adolescent males ("Peter Pans") are mirrors of the frequently romanticized femivore when he serves as admirable male paragon and vision of transformation (e.g., Cinderella) and she as desirable female companion. This archetypal pattern is obvious in the contemporary bodice rippers known as Harlequin or gothic romances. Amid the mundane, the femivore festers as an accepted and falsely innocuous part of life's furniture and automatically assumed fantasies. He need not be obvious or even deliberate. Like Isaac Asimov's Mule in Foundation and Empire, the femivore and his rapturous female victims only acquire consciences and guilt if they ever become aware of the true nature of their desires and couplings. Social acceptance prevents this from happening, either in the minds of artistic creators or characters. The femivore and victim celebrate an unconscious subjugation to the rite of sexual ruination. He is seduction without fruition. It is his nature to leave -- fidelity is beyond his abilities -- and while the female may empirically know this, she refuses emotionally to acknowledge it, choosing instead to consecrate and consummate herself to oblivion.

The cause of the femivore's vitality is clear. He is bound irrevocably to many materializations of the hero, even when he is the "lovable bastard." Normal people are always helpless before heroes, and women are expected to fawn into sexual surrender before these conquerors as they continually move from feat to trial, leaving broken hearts (and devastated psyches and self-concepts) scattered behind them. Thus, one necessary task in the recognition of the femivore is to reassess definitions of the heroic with an eye on its exploitative nature. In this, the

hero may be a subtle, likable, socially enviable, and glamorous rapist, for whom beguilement replaces force.

Bram Dijkstra offers a striking, carnal description of the relationship

between the femivore and the pliable woman:

The virgin and the whore, the saint and the vampire -- two designations for a single dualistic opposition: that of woman as man's exclusive and forever pliable private property, on the one hand, and her transformation, upon her denial of man's ownership rights to her, into a polyandrous predator indiscriminately lusting after man's social essence, on the other (334).

Nina Auerbach's justification for the inevitable conquest of the femivore, in *Woman and the Devil: The Life of a Victorian Myth*, is more psychological and civilized: femivores "are endowed with a magic beyond their own; they possess the secret tradition of the culture," within which "the women they captivate seem not just enfeebled but culturally naked" (16).

As compelling and engaging as Dijkastra's and Auerbach's descriptions are, they fail because they do not plumb the depths that an archetype involves. Both the femivore and his willing victims are, indeed, fonts for the astonishing mythological histories of the virgin birth and the birth of the hero. The "secret tradition" to which Auerbach mysteriously alludes is really not arcane; rather, it is the mythic legacy of humanity's long primordial traditions surrounding human women experiencing supernatural impregnation, being the vehicles for virgin births, and bearing heroes and gods. These events are made of the very essences of magic and functional fantasy. By definition, the amorous visitations of frolicking, anthropomorphic deities are a "psychic genesis"; everything about them must be non-empirical and of the "highest good" (Jung 166). The lusty visitations of these "Invisible Unknowns" (Campbell Hero, 297) and "Expected Ones" (Kolbenschlag 108) embody all the "other-centered" female fantasies of the perfect child, the hero-son, and ultimate fulfillment of fruition. Consider the following wonder children, selected for their chronological and geographic indicativeness, that fill human history and bear testament to the beneficent visitations of benevolent femivores: the Babylonian Sargon I; the Hindu Krishna; the Summerian Tammuz; the Toltec Quetzalcoatl (Campbell, Primitive 457); the Black Feet Little Star: the Roman Romulus and Remus; the Greek Perseus, Hercules, and Telephus; the Aztec Coatliuce; the Tongaese Fatai-going-underneath-sandlewood (Campbell Hero, 312); the Persian Zoroaster; and the Christian Christ. In light of these divine gifts, is it too surprising that women, throughout history, have yearningly awaited the carnal embraces of the Egyptian Ra/Re (Campbell Oriental, 98-100), the Christian Holy Ghost, the Irish Lovetalker (Duffy 47), the Greek Zeus, the German Odin and Loki, the Toltec All-Father, the Eskimo Bird-Phantom who seduces

Sédna, the Black Feet Morning Star, and even the pedestrian knight-errant? If these circumstances seem too provincial or archaic to modern audiences, recently. the growing Elvis Presley cult has given rise to reports of virgin births and spiritual intercourse, demonstrating the continuing vitality of this mythology. In addition, the activities and supplicatory oblations of female rock and athletic groupies have often been chronicled. Such celebrity rites of sexual surrender prove only too well that each age worships its own gods.

This willingness to wait for transformation by an external, magic force has plagued women throughout time (Dijkstra 318). It illustrates the religious phenomenon of awe, the state of blind belief in and obedience to appearances and fixed ideas that have been distilled and instilled by religious and social dogma. This continuing, ritual participation is what Joseph Campbell identifies as surrender by general humanity to a system of "historically conditioned sentiments, activities, and beliefs . . ." (*Primitive* 462). Women are particularly susceptible to such submissions because of the traditional social and spiritual oppression and exploitation that they have suffered for ages and continue to suffer. As Kolbenschlag observes:

If Don Juan is the archetypal male aesthete [from Kierkegarrd in *Either/Or* as the life characterized by immersion in the immediate; the "accidental person"], his victims are archetypal female aesthetes. "To seduce all girls is the masculine expression of the feminine yearning to let herself be seduced once and with all her heart and soul." Thus, the absence of commitment to the self, the compulsion to "live for another," to be psychically annihilated and controlled by someone beyond the self-common symptoms of female psychology -- are the characteristics of the minimal level of spiritual existence. This level of existence is marked by illusion, since power over oneself has been given over to someone outside oneself (24).

The femivore's false promises are the expectations of power and the acquisition of magic. Contemporary manifestations of women's frustrated need for power are, of course, the "shopping syndrome" (Kolbenschlag 17-18) and, from the realm of the cinema, the recent films that demonstrate the power of older women over younger, Dionysian men, such as *A Night in Heaven, In Praise of Older Women*, and *In the Mood*, the last supposedly the true story of the teen-age Woo Woo Kid, who married older women with the best of intentions. Thus, the silver screen contends that there is now even hope for middle-aged women, who have lived beyond the socially acceptable standard of beauty, to redeem their "barren" lives. Tania Modleski, in *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass-Produced Fantasies for Women*, provides a model² that yields further and more penetrating insight into this "power" that women seek in their bondings with femivores in her examination of

the Harlequin romance and its link to the nineteenth-century traditions of Samuel Richardson, Charlotte Brontë (*Jane Eyre*), and Jane Austen (*Pride and Prejudice*). Modleski describes the male-female interaction as follows: the male, older protagonist is "... mocking, cynical, contemptuous, often hostile, and even somewhat brutal. By the end, however, all misunderstandings are cleared away, and the hero reveals his love for the heroine, who reciprocates" (36). What Modleski's description of an enormously popular female myth shows is that women are not only awaiting transformation but are also seeking the godlike power to transform. This is common enough, and it is the rare individual that has not seen women enter into relationships with debilitating men with clear visions of "fixing" them and "mending their ways" once single males become husbands (a desire that frustration will often transfer to male children). Thus, women do seek the roles of priestess and shaper, not just generatrix.

Yet, historically, women's power to transform and their compulsions to be transformed are rarely realized in their interactions with "significant" males. The femivore, divine child, and virgin birth demonstrate women's secondary priorities to visitations from male deities and to greater wonders and magic. In the literature, art, theology, folklore, and mythology of the femivore, women are rarely more than vessels that gain little except passing interest from their creators and lovers. Women fade away or into the background before the grandeurs of great goodness and omnipotent causes. An obvious illustration of this is Mary, who is but a pale and emasculated version of her historic antecedent, the Earth Mother/Mother Goddess (Kolbenschlag 186).

Why the femivore himself behaves as he does could be easily dismissed with superficial psychology. For example, he suffers from satyriasis, the socially approved form of nymphomania. He is insecure or lonely. He fears imprisonment, the feminine power of engulfment, and the loss of power. Certainly, there is something to all of this (if only from the viewpoint of active and functional rationalizations), and femivorism does lead so many males to spiritually and emotionally destructive and barren existences.

From social and psychological perspectives, however, to leave the causes of the vitality of the femivore to either sex is gravely erroneous. His existence requires a conspiracy and a mutual acquiescence from both sexes. The couplings of femivores and victims repeat archetypal patterns in which they both seek individually and mutually destructive power. Most curiously, there is false pride and hope that derives from participating, that somehow this ageless conspiracy brings the divine into the mortal. Such repetitive sacrifices of the flesh and the psyche throughout all human history and art point to the great danger of ignorance and insensitivity. Those who do not understand can only mirror and repeat. Life

happens to them, and femivore and victim both denigrate what it means to be human.

From the more positive perspective of literary criticism, the exploration of the femivore and other archetypes demonstrate how critical the interdisciplinary and international "fantastic sensibility" can be to revisioning art and thought. By deviating sharply from traditional intellectual restrictions of time and field, it uncovers not only the subtle, but the obvious, thereby creating new epistemologies. Indeed, by their very natures, archetypal images are stunningly obvious once articulated. What remains for the femivore and other such "new" discoveries is to view and test them on the broadest possible stage of history and knowledge. If they are legitimate and essential parts of the past and future of the human condition, they should appear over and over again across the full spectrum of both the mundane and the lofty activities of people and artists as they play out their lives.

NOTES

¹A shorter version of this paper was originally presented at the Ninth International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts. I am indebted to the numerous and generous observations and suggestions that its presentation inspired, especially to those of Kathryn Hume, Carl B. Yoke, and Veronica Hollinger.

²While this male-female mythology may be a potent modern force, its antiquity is unquestioned. Beside all appropriate material surrounding heroic art, Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale" is almost a perfect match for the "modern" Harlequin romance.

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THE SURVIVAL OF THE FOOL IN MODERN HEROIC FANTASY

The modern mentality has all but destroyed the fool in literature. Staggered by the stress on reason and science, he fell victim to the collective empiricism of Neoclassicism, Realism, Naturalism, Existentialism, and Skepticism. As a figure who denies order, mocking the society that ironically he needs to survive, the fool's power to melt the "solidity of the world" became, finally, too much of an embarrassment. The fool has been transformed into a superficial scapegoat whose comic efforts are reduced simply to chaos rather than enlightenment as Harlan Ellison's "Repent Harlequin! Said the Ticktockman" (*Galaxy*, December 1965) illustrates by its pathetic marriage and Robert E. Vardeman and Victor Milan's *The Sundered Realm* (Playboy Press, 1980) demonstrates by its maimed, castrated Prince who retains only the fool's license to speak freely in the presence of his demagogue sister. As Carl Jung points out in *Psychological Types*, the modern intellect recognizes everything but itself as fantasy, and being a closed system, the intellect represents fantasy activity as much as possible. Therefore, the fool must die.

Ambiguously, as the artistic and philosophic legacies of Copernicus, Newton, Darwin, Sartre, and others gave birth to a singular stress on actuality and immediacy that emasculated the fool, the fall of the nobility and its own special order destroyed the social environment that the fool needed as the frame for wisdom and mockery. The fool dies with the king, and Shakespeare's parallel of the hanging of the fool with unlawful abdication in *King Lear* is a harbinger of the fool's later crucifixion on the crosses of the rise of the middle class and the fall of cosmic order. Enid Welsford, in her classic study, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History*, accurately summarizes the fatal descent of the fool:

The King, the Priest and the Fool all belong to the same regime, all belong essentially to a society shaped by belief in Divine order, human inadequacy, efficacious ritual; and there is no real place for any of them in a world increasingly dominated by the notions of the puritan, the scientist, and the captain of industry; for strange as it may seem the fool in cap and bells can only flourish among people who have sacraments, who value symbols as well as tools, and cannot forever survive the decay of faith in divinely imposed authority, the rejection of all taboo and mysterious inspiration (193).

However, to believe that the fool is a victim of the modern era, one that Erich Neumann condemned so fully for its appalling inability to deal with the human soul,³ is to fail to recognize the fool's characteristic plasticity. Smacked

over and over again, he will spring back up like a Joe Palooka doll--eternal in his capacity for regeneration. To discover him, the search must be conducted among the rigidly structured social orders in which his vision and folly originally flourished. Joseph Heller, in his mock epic *Catch-22* (Simon and Schuster, 1961), uses the military and the absurdity of seemingly unending bombing mission after bombing mission as just such an environment. When Orr finally reaches Sweden on his rubber raft, the reader shares the celebration of the fool as outsider who still manages to triumph despite repressive and ordered systems. In an instant, Orr is transformed from "a permanent scapegoat whose official duty is to jeer continually at his superiors in order to bear their ill luck" (Welsford 74) to the fool who is licensed to summon the "magical force of continuing life" and violate order with impunity. The success of Heller's Orr as a figure who exhilarates centers of life and, thus, causes joyous laughter is also present in the immense popularity of Richard Hooker's *M.A.S.H.* (Morrow, 1968), Robert Altman's film version (1970), and its television continuation.

While the bathetic characterizations of Woody Allen are indications of just how much of an exception *Catch-22* and *M.A.S.H.* are, the fool has been alive and well in examples of heroic or sword-&-sorcery fantasy for some time now. He is still uncommon, for heroic fantasy's roots in saga, epic, and romance give it a predominantly solemn tone--inhospitable to the fool. Were it not for the Hobbits, for example, a study of humor in J.R.R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings would be the shortest article ever written, a characteristic that made the series so delightfully vulnerable to Henry N. Beard and Douglas C. Kenney's parody, *Bored of the Rings* (New American Library, 1969). In the same vein, John Jakes mocked Robert E. Howard's Conan and aptly named Solomon Kane along with other, equally grim examples of sword & sorcery, in *Mention My Name in Atlantis* . . . (DAW, 1972). None-the-less, heroic fantasy does have the necessary orderly world view and royalty to be fertile ground for the fool despite its exaggeratedly sanctimonious vice and virtue.

In fact, fantasy, in general, is usually more rigorous in its ethical constructs than the actual world, and while it is most often socially and morally non-didactic, heroic fantasy is predominantly preoccupied with psychomachia. This stress on the polarities of good and evil also explains why the fool doesn't occur more frequently despite the suitability of the environment. The fool is most frequently an enemy of the didactic, an amoral, Janus-like figure who lives in ambiguity, not the clear win-or-lose conflict of the psychomachia. Thus, Samwise, Tolkien's fool in the Lord of the Rings, becomes a functional agent only in the final struggle at the Crack of Doom between Gollum and the evilly-possessed Frodo. Here Samwise serves in the fool's role of a counterweight to whatever principle is in

control.⁸ Many heroic fantasies seek to make or re-establish boundaries, and the fool is a boundary breaker,⁹ as Enid Welsford points out:

Under the dissolvent influence of his personality the iron network of physical, social and moral law, which enmeshes us from cradle to grave, seems—for a moment—negligible as a web of gossamer (317).

The fool and his folly, an agent for the freeing of the imagination (Welsford 221), is a true alien in a heroic fantasy that has ethical an pompous extremes that are self-protective and intolerant. Examples of this are the two main characters in Italo Calvino's The Nonexistent Knight (1957; rpt. New York and London: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977), a fantasy set during the wars of Charlemagne. Agilulf, a paladin, is only an empty, immaculate suit of white armor. He exists only by his will power and constant belief in himself and Charlemagne's holy cause. He never sleeps, and while fools are supposed to expose pretenders, 10 Agilulf's twenty-four-hour puritanism and meticulous attention to proper procedures are constant plagues upon his less glorified and mundane comrades. He loses his self-sustained life when his perverse comrades pressure him to discover whether or not the damsel he rescued in his youth, a feat upon which Agilulf bases his entire reputation and honor, was a virgin. When it appears that she was not (via a convoluted deus ex machina reminiscent of eighteenth-century domestic drama), Agilulf literally falls apart. He is a victim of his own inability to understand the follies of the world, his comrades and himself. He cannot avail himself of the fool's ability to protect himself from the environment 11 nor can he be a touchstone to test the true quality of men and manners (Welsford 249). Interestingly, a multi-named idiot, a natural fool and Agilulf's page, does survive. He is the opposite of the paladin and is totally unaware of his own existence (28), thus, his many names: one is as good as any other. Among his many spontaneous performances that delight everyone are his near drownings when he forgets if he is to eat his soup or if it is to eat him and when he forgets if he's to be in the ocean or the ocean in him. He can, however, be a bit pesty when he thinks he's a fish and gets tangled in the villagers' nets. He is a "prisoner of the world's stuff," the narrator tells. Because he is, he is allowed to survive. Agilulf has none of the "world's stuff"; thus, he perishes. Both are too extreme to be true fools. Somewhere between them is the true conscious fool who can break sown the distinction between folly and wisdom (Welsford 27) and be a slave to neither.

Another figure in modern heroic fantasy who also cannot distinguish among the ambiguities of the world, although with less painful results than in Agilulf's case, is Zdim in L. Sprague de Camp's *The Fallible Fiend* (Signet/New American Library, 1973). In this burlesque tale, Zdim is a demon drafted in his native realm to serve a mortal wizard in exchange for much-needed iron. Zdim's difficulty is

that he takes literally everything he is told. Like Butch in Robert Bloch's "A Good Knight's Work" (*Unknown Worlds*, October 1941), who must cope with a visit from a medieval knight, who doesn't have even the remotest understanding of the twentieth century, or Jim Eckert in Gordon R. Dickson's *The Dragon and the George* (Ballantine, 1976), whose mind is placed in the body of a very large dragon in an alternate world, Zdim is hilariously confused. When asked to shake, he gyrates his hips; told to devour the first person who enters the wizard's workshop, he consumes the apprentice. After he and the master decide to go on a vegetarian diet, he is incapable of devouring a true thief. Obviously, Zdim is caught in the world's paradoxes and ambiguities. The professional fool, being aware of his role, uses these to his own gain, ignoring the created laws of logic, to satisfy his own needs and exercise his special insights. However, Zdim, a demon of no small intelligence, does learn the ropes and manages to manipulate various leaders and chieftains to save his adopted city. In fact, he gets so good at it that, after he returns to his own plane, he requests another "sabbatical" on Earth.

As mentioned earlier, the fool is invariably an alien or outlaw within the social order, but as with any figure that lives by his wits, he is dependent on the same order for his existence (Welsford 55). He is, in part, a parasite. Yet, he is a powerful leech who lives through exploitation. His power is his ability to live via ambiguity, which is a natural characteristic of the cosmos, while the more normal characters around him keep expecting order, honesty, and justice. Thus, he is ennobled during holiday, as the incarnate Lord of Misrule, when everyone yields to natural instincts and moves to the rhythm of life. 12 In a rare example of the combination of social satire and fantasy, Charles G. Finney creates just such a figure in The Magician Out of Manchuria (Pyramid, 1968; rpt. Garland, 1981). Set in China amid the socialist "Great Leap Forward," it focuses on the magical and scandalous activities of a thief, magician, and general rapscallion. Finney's character is a picaresque figure who prefers wine to gold and who must shed his skin at the most inopportune moments due to a python in his family tree. He, his apprentice, and his ass join with a very ugly queen; she has been the victim of an attempted assassination, and the magician has transformed her into the Queen of Lust with a magic balm. The magician's strenuous, amorous interludes with the Queen, after he has shed the obese skin he wears at the beginning of the novel and has become strikingly handsome, illustrate another traditional characteristic of the fool--his exaggerated sexuality. 13 More importantly, The Magician Out of Manchuria demonstrates the fool's role as compensator as he balances the predominant ruling order. He plays what John Danby identifies as the game of "handy dandy." 14 In this case, his whimsy, exploitation, and cunning are the comic alternative to the rote conformity of the "Great Leap Forward." As always, he mocks the artificial class distinctions that societies create form only superficial

characteristics and then fervently believe in as facts. While Enid Welsford identifies the priests and their no-nonsense religions as the fool's greatest enemies (180), Finney's rogue attracts more modern and more expansive threats. The social satire of the novel demonstrates how secularism, socialism, and nominalism have reduced the continual rebirth of imagination and the liberating mind-play of festivity to socially integrated and inferior portions of the supposedly "superior" utilitarian world. Art is subordinated to "real" waking experience, and the rhythm of spontaneous life, which the true fool so thoroughly embodies, is lost.

This role as compensator is probably the fool's most valuable characteristic in modern heroic fantasy. Like Finney's magician, Heller's Orr, and Walter Wangerin's Mundo Cani in the early parts of The Book of the Dun Cow (1978; late in the novel, he becomes a sacrificial hero), this is Samwise's role in the Lord of the Rings as he attempts to place his diminutive self across the fulcrum from the deep solemnity of the trilogy's virtuous and fell forces. De Camp's Zdim, like Bink in Piers Anthony's Xanth series (1977-1982), also serves this purpose as he turns potentially horrific events into laughter. As Puck does in Shakespeare's Midsummer's Night's Dream, the successful fool often has to stand against the potentially destructive and maining forces of the world of experience. Sustaining vision and imagination, the fool continually tries to recreate the world 17 by averting potential horror with kinetic folly. In this, he is in opposition to the hero who is trying to conquer the world, and typically, it is the hero, rather than the fool, who is featured in sword-&-sorcery fantasy, much in the manner of Northrop Frye's theory of romance. This is why Calvino's Agilulf fails: he hasn't the balancing power of the fool nor the social acceptance of the hero.

Another figure who stands against the frequently dreary and dangerous atmosphere of heroic fantasy and is a transformer of the mundane is Black, the sidekick in Roger Zelazny's series of short stories and one novel (*The Changing Land*, 1981), featuring Dilvish the Damned or the Deliverer (depending on who's speaking at the moment). Dilvish has been cursed by the Dark One, and for two-hundred years, his body stood as a statue while his soul suffered in Hell, his punishment for saving a sacrificial virgin. ¹⁸ Clearly, Dilvish is not given to frivolity by disposition. However, Black, his burnished iron and magical warhorse, is given to speaking sardonically and even sarcastically at times. Unburdened by the morbid irony of Cugel the Clever in Jack Vance's *The Eyes of the Overworld* (1966) and no prancing jester in cap and bells, Black is a prime illustration of Robert Hillis Goldsmith's observation, in *Wise Fools in Shakespeare*, that the wise fool is often more ironic and less direct in his folly than the buffoon, ¹⁹ and Black is characterized by his understated wisdom. He demonstrates this frequently by his droll insights and knowledge of impending danger. For example, in "Tower of Ice," he mutters about how someone of his dignity has to pull a sled out of a ditch

and explains that one day civilization will have an entire system of physics to explain what he is doing.²⁰ Like Elric's eternal sidekick in Michael Moorcock's sword-& sorcery series, Black's character is determined by his Bogartesque tone, which is well illustrated by the following interchange as he carries Dilvish through a dementedly sorcerous gauntlet:

Lowering his head, Black plunged down the hillside into the fog, his eyes glowing like coals. The ground was shaking steadily now, and in the portions of which he had view, Dilvish could see cracks appearing, widening. Wisps of mingle with the fog. The winds rose again about them, though not as strongly as before.

Leaping among large, cube-shaped green rocks in a very unhorselike fashion, Black bore steadily to the right as the ground leveled and the fog abated in patches. The sound of a terrific explosion reached them and splatters of hot mud rained nearby, though only a few fell upon them.

"In the future, "Dilvish remarked, "I would prefer not cutting things quite that closely."

"Sorry," Black replied, "I was caught up in the beauty of the moment." ²¹

Zelazny's Black brings up an important point about the fool in sword-&-sorcery fantasy, which is that he is often disguised and not as obvious as he is when he wears the conspicuous motley. This should be no immediate surprise since the wise fool frequently adopts disguises in literature. In fantasy, however, there is a more critical issue here because the literature's totality is already a statement of the reversal of normal expectations, a suspension of the rules of everyday in which the fictive experience itself assumes the traditional role of the fool in the reader's mundane world. Thus, in their roles of balancers, fantasy's fools are sometimes reminders of the pragmatic world the reader has left to enter the misrule of the fantasy realm.

Nowhere in modern fantasy is the use of the fool as a referent to the reader's cosmology better demonstrated than by Schmendrick the Magician in Peter S. Beagle's *The Last Unicorn* (Viking, 1968; rpt. Gregg, 1978). Schmendrick is one of the Last Unicorn's companions as she journeys to free her ensorcered kin from the spells of King Haggard, a twisted creature who hungers for beauty but has the crippling knowledge that nothing is worth loving since it will only die in his hands.²³ One of Schmendrick's important roles in the novel is maintaining a fatalistic optimism after he has inadvertently turned the Unicorn into a maid to save her from Haggard's awesomely fell Red Bull and, as a result, introduced her to the horrors and pains of morality. This is just another of his misfired spells, a

condition he has come to expect since he has no faith in his ability to expertly do any real magic. He has said to the Unicorn, "Take me with your for laughs, for luck, for the unknown" (*The Many Worlds* . . . 58). His attitude reflects the realistic view of the reader's world that magic is really useless and only a sham, for he "can't turn cream into butter" (53). Schmendrick considers himself only a storyteller, a traveling prestidigitator, and a fool; not even the Unicorn's magic can turn him into a true magician (59). Thus, he serves as his own foil when magical power does triumphantly take possession of him, and his humorous misadventures stand between the reader and the potential tragedy of the wondrous Unicorn dying as a human and never saving her kin.

Interestingly, the one immediately recognizable fooling heroic fantasy appears in *The Last Unicorn* only briefly and is a slightly mad butterfly (*The Many Worlds* . . . 32-34). This delightfully blithe figure identifies himself as a roving gambler and brings laughter to the Unicorn for the first time in her arduous quest. He misdirects, rhymes, riddles, puns, and sings—all motion, whim and impulse—before his madness suddenly vanishes for a moment, and he warns the Unicorn of the dread forces that await. However, in true fool fashion, he quickly recants his wisdom and lapses into balancing folly. And, as he filters briefly through Beagle's wondrous novel, one is immediately provided with the vision of the perfect fool as he must have capered across the Elizabethan stage some five-hundred years before.

Thus, the fool is alive and well in some modern heroic fantasy. In these works, his perennial power to melt the solidity of the world (Welsford 221) is augmented by his ability to maintain the dual realistic and fantastic perspective of the fantasy reader. He prevents the often violent and dangerous heroic world from tumbling into horror and fear, and his balancing act maintains wonder and intuitive wisdom, The fool prevents the yielding of the world to humanity's continual attempts to impose an artificial order that is at best boring and at worst creatively stultifying. As Don Antonio points out to Samson Carrasco, in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, human beings need the fool:

"O sir! . . . may God forgive you for the wrong you have done in robbing the world of the most diverting madman who was ever seen. Is it not plain, sir, that his cure can never benefit mankind half as much as the pleasure he affords by his eccentricities? But I feel sure, sir bachelor, that all your art will not cure such deeprooted madness, and were it not uncharitable, I would express the hope that he may never recover, for by his cure we should lose not only the knight's good company, but also the drollery of his squire Sancho Panza, which is enough to transform melancholy itself into mirth.²⁴

NOTES

¹Enid Welsford, *The Fool: His Social and Literary History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1935), pp. 221, 55. All later citations to this landmark study are in the text.

²C.G. Jung, *Psychological Types*, trans. H.G. Baynes, re. R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1971), pp. 59, 53.

³Erich Newmann, Depth Psychology and a New Ethic, trans. Eugene Rolfe

(1949; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1973), p. 25

⁴William Willeford, *The Fool and His Scepter: A Study in Clowns and Jesters and Their Audience* ([Evanston, IL]: Northwestern UP, 1969), p. 87.

⁵For further expansion of the cause of laughter, see Susanne K. Langer, *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art* (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1953), p. 340.

⁶Robert Hillis Goldsmith, *Wise Fools in Shakespeare* (East Lansing:

Michigan State UP, 1963), p. 48.

John Danby, "The Fool and Handy Dandy." In *Shakespeare's Doctrine of Nature: A Study of King Lear* (1949); rpt. in *Shakespeare: Modern Essays in Criticism*. Ed. Leonard F. Dean (New York: Oxford UP, 1961), p. 333. For further comment on the fool's amoral nature, see Langer, p. 342.

⁸Danby, *Shakespeare* . . ., p. 334.

⁹Willeford, p. 27.

¹⁰Danby, p. 334.

¹¹Ibid., p. 339.

¹²Langer, p. 349.

¹³Willeford, p. 22.

¹⁴See note 7.

¹⁵See my *The Literature of Fantasy: A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography of Modern Fantasy Fiction* (New York and London: Garland, 1979), pp. xxii - xxiii, for further elaboration on this point.

¹⁶Herbert Fingarette, *The Self in Transformation: Psychoanalysis*, *Philosophy, and the Life of the Spirit* (1963; rpt. New York: Harper & Row, 1965),

p. 189.

¹⁷Willeford, p. 99.

¹⁸Roger Zelazny, "Thelinda's Song," Fantastic June 1965, pp. 5-11.

¹⁹Goldsmith, pp. 11, 89.

²⁰Roger Zelazny, "Tower of Ice," in *Flashing Swords No. 5: Demons and Daggers*, ed. Lin Carter (New York: Nelson Doubleday [Science Fiction Book Club], 1981), p. 53.

²¹Roger Zelanzy, *The Changing Land* (New York: Ballantine, 1981), pp. 46-47.

²²Goldsmith, p. 20.

²³Peter S. Beagle, "Introduction," in *The Many Worlds of Peter S. Beagle*

(New York: Viking, 1978), p. xii

²⁴Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra, *Don Quixote of La Mancha* (1605, 1610; rpt. trans. Walter Stark. New York: NAL/Signet, 1957), p. 415.

THE ARTISAN IN MODERN FANTASY

Despite fantasy literature's general antipathy, if not animosity, toward technology and the crafts, the archetypal artisan has managed to survive in a small number of works as outsider and scapegoat. This deviates from earlier times when some artisans were considered divine and were courted and revered, as was Vulcan when Venus pleaded with him for weapons in The Aeneid (212-13) and when all mortal weapons failed against his creations (332). In Ugaritic mythology, even Baal sought the skills of the craft-god, Kothar-u-Khasis, to design and build his house (Hooke 83-4). The Norse Völund and his successor the British Wayland (patron of iron workers) forged magic armor for the gods and heroes and demonstrated the importance of smiths in primitive societies (Bellingham 72: Guerber 179; Folklore 22). More recently, in fantasy literature, these figures, who once looked to as great a deity as Pallas Athene as their patroness (Graves I:96-100), are barely tolerated and yet their skills and value often caused their masters to bind, maim, or manipulate them, as was the Greek god of fire and metalworking, Hephæstus (Graves I:87n1). The very strong indication is that there is a human fear of anyone who takes the ability to shape out of the hands of deities. Further, within the art of the fantastic, the artisan also demystifies and deconstructs the processes of creation, magic, and the supernatural.

However, these utilitarian outsiders are absolutely necessary to give form to the imaginative and artistic visions of their masters and employers. Indeed, their existence may be because of the simple necessity of the crafting of talismans. As such artisans tend to be completely obedient, and their talismans generally are in accord with natural order, are functional, and have tasks and purposes as well as beauty. Generally, artisans' efforts descend into contemporary culture as folk craft, not art (Brunvand 426). Like clumsy artists, artisans are incomplete beings, needing the gifts of others to survive and produce. They are like artists' familiars, necessary, yet not respected. They are taken-for-granted "furniture" characters amid the more glowing ones that attract most readers' attention. A primary example of this is the two blind metal burnishers who create the virgin speculum for Vergil Magus in Avram Davidson's The Phoenix and the Mirror. They labor in the dark to complete the mirror, are absolutely essential to its creation, and yet never figure again in any of the important actions (166-8). A possible parallel to this anonymous practically might also be Stephen R. Donaldson's Rock People in his Thomas Covenant series.

Artisans also supply the dexterity needed for the visionary and the wizard to exist. Artisans are simply craftspeople who combine others' imaginations with their mechanics; they are the "grunting muscle" needed to create their patrons' talismans and give form to their inspirations. In a number of ways, this parallels

the distinction between the scientist, who provides theory, and the technologist, who supplies application and implementation. An obvious example from science fiction of how exploitative this sometimes can be is what the Mule does with poor little Ebling Mis in Isaac Asimov's *Foundation and Empire* when he drives the little psychohistorian's intellect beyond its limits. Thus, figures of both magical and political power commission or command artisans to make and build. Artisans leave the hands of the powerful unsullied or supply the powerful with the capable hands they simply lack, or they free the greater from any responsibilities for flawed products. Indeed, when artisans' creations fails, they are frequently made scapegoats, a general affliction endured by the outsider. The blame for failure falls upon the lesser, and this is certainly also an aesthetic method of imposing the limitations on magic's omnipotence that are part of fantasy literature's "natural law."

Dramatically, these lesser shapers of greater imaginations do often construct flawed creations that recoil on their patrons. Many times this is because the inspiration is tainted even though the craft is superb. The contrast between Noah's Ark and the Tower of Babel illustrates this. On one hand, the Ark is properly inspired and saves the remnants of the world. The Ark is in cosmological accord just as Ariel, Prospero's artisan, is in tune with the master's imagination in William Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (III. iii. 83-93). The Tower, on the other hand, is conceived in darkness and superbia (or, at very least, an inappropriate means to reach Heaven) and falls upon its creators. To this, John Milton adds Satanic inspiration in *Paradise Lost* when he likens the Tower to Hell. Further, Milton's Mammon, Muleiber (I. 732-50), and others (I. 6786-88) produce flawed creations doomed by their Satanic inspiration. Certainly, decadence and deterioration follow when the form of creation does not follow from appropriate substance (imagination); exultation follows when it does.

At other times, the creative intention is thwarted by malefic intervention. Thor's hammer, Mjollnir, has a short handle because Loki, a trickster figure and himself an outcast, turned himself into a fly and stung the eyelids of the dwarf who was forging it (Davidson, H. R. 42-3). The dwarf, another "furniture" character, is unnamed and is a set of hands, not an individual; he is a true outsider lost to and ignored by any history. Such flawed creation is the case even for the divine Vulcan, "The God whose Might is Fire." In *The Aeneid*, the sword he made for Turnus' father, Daunus (311-12), proved "treacherous [for Turnus] and broke ..." (331). From a simpler, yet equally antithetical view of technology and craft, Icarus' wings dissolve before nothing more complicated than the sun when his exuberance takes him too high, an obvious metaphor for superbia. In the Finnish *Kalevala*, two more examples of flawed creations further emphasize the view that the artisans' products should always be viewed with caution. The most obvious

one is the cornucopic and tainted Sampo, which was forged by Ilmarinen as a wedding gift to gain the daughter of the Mistress of Pohjola and which is later distorted by the Mistress (I: Runo X). The second is the "Gold and Silver Bride," also a creation of the wondersmith Ilmarinen. Mourning the death of his wife and despondent, he forges a metal maiden only to discover that the fire makes one side of her too hot and the night makes the other too cold (II: Runo XXXVII). Here, the artisan cannot even serve himself, much less any higher purpose, and there are strong indications that the flaw here is that Ilmarinen is too self-serving. In an interesting pastiche, Emil Petaja redid the *Kalevala*, and the Sampo figures centrally in *The Star Mill*. Here it is identified by the protagonist, as he prepares to destroy it, as essentially wrong:

Ilmar shivered and almost loosed his mind-clutch on the Witch. Ancestral guilt flogged him. What a fool Ilmarinen had been! What a consummate fool! Even in its original happier state the Sampo was a menace. Food. Clothes. All manner of luxury. *What then?* No. To possess the Sampo in any form was to become greater than a god ... (127).

Of course, while malefic inspiration and/or distortion can damage creation, corrupt artisans can do the same. Their error is manipulation without understanding. In the wrong hands, even inspiration itself is to be feared and dreaded and further alienates the presumptuous artisans from their cosmoses. In English literature the penultimate illustration of this is Chaucer's compilation of all the fears and evil implications that surrounded alchemy, "The Canon's Yeoman's Tale." J. E. Grennen improves on Charles Muscatine's work in *Chaucer and the French Tradition* (especially p. 213) and equates the Canon's fire with Hell (much as Milton does later). Michael Olmert further identifies the Canon with the Anti-Christ and the Destroyer of Souls. Thus, within a rigid Judeo-Christian context, artisans/alchemists suffer for attempting to usurp the powers of God, as Adam and Faust do, and such artisans' creations, like the Sampo, must be flawed perversions, nothing more.

One of the more conspicuous examples of the evil artisan is Dorje, the villain of Talbot Mundy's lesser-known, lost-race novel, *Jimgrim*. Combining the usual intrepid Britisher and the pseudo-mystical Eastern power with the element of super-science buried beneath the sands of the Gobi (203, 230), Mundy spins a tale of the obviously ignorant, uninspired manipulator. Dorje discovers the plans and formulas (254) for anti-gravity airships (226-7, 257, 262-3, 269-70), brass tubes that react with electricity to destroy everything near them (65, 191), telepathic communication (257), an untraceable poison gas (168), and a drug that provides vitality and intellect and supersedes the normal human limitations of sleep and food (called "soma" [253, 266]). Of course, the power of all this ancient

knowledge overcomes Dorje since it is improperly gained, misunderstood by him,

and self-serving.

Roger Zelazny's Isle of the Dead has a dramatic contrast between the light and dark artisans. Francis Sandow, a seemingly complete combination of artist and artisan, is the only Earthling trained in worldscaping by the alien and ancient Pei'ans. Isolated by his wealth and power, he initially believes himself to be an independent agent. An elaborate vengeance throws him into conflict with a renegade and unsuccessful worldscaper, Green-Green, and Sandow discovers that he is not quite the independent artist he thought. Actually, he is the manifestation of Shimbo of Darktree, Shrugger of Thunders, and an artisan, albeit an extraordinarily competent one. Like many Zelazny characters, his function is to bring order out of chaos; as he says, "Where there had been darkness, I had hung my worlds" (185-6). Thus, even though he first appears to be the imaginative artist with the skills of an artisan, combining substance and form, he soon discovers that he has been manipulated (but not exploited) by the benevolent Shimbo (168-9). Like Noah, he, at least, has proper inspiration. Standing initially against the sardonic Sandow is Green-Green, the personification of Belion, the Pei'an god of chaos and mortal enemy of Shimbo. Green-Green's creations lack "creative design" (129): he is "a lousy craftsman" (129) and "the clumsiest Pei'an" Sandow has ever met (112). Thus, while both characters are controlled by patrons, as is Shandon, Sandow's final antagonistic embodiment of Belion, Sandow has the advantages of his own character. None of this is too surprising. As Carl Yoke has observed, Zelazny's characters are almost invariably outsiders, usually because of their own savvy, wariness, mistrust, or superiority. Yama, the creator of all the gods' weapons and marvels in Lord of Light, is the eternal, pimply-faced nerd despite the bodies he assumes, and the protagonists and shapers of "Shadow" in Zelazny's Amber novels are alienated within their own families and are often the unknowing instruments of personages and powers beyond their understandings. In fact, it is probably their creative and craft abilities, such as Corwin's creation of a new pattern in Prince of Chaos (87), that mandates their alienation and outsidedness.

In J. R. R. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings, Sauron tricks the Elves, as Shimbo does Sandow, into forging all but one of the Rings of Power. However, here the inspiration is not well-intentioned. As David and Carol Stevens have pointed out, using many of Tolkien's own words from *The Silmarillion*, the Elves fall to the same superbia that afflicts many artisans:

Tolkien again emphasizes his concept of the Fall: "In [*The Rings of Power*] we see a sort of second fall or at least 'error' of the Elves." In their pride, under the suggestion of Sauron, they attempted to create "a separate independent paradise," using magic and the Machine: "With the aid of Sauron's lore they

made *Rings of Power* ('power' is an ominous and sinister word in all these tales, except as applied to the gods)."

They became obsessed, as Tolkien puts it, "with 'fading,' the mode in which the changes of time ... [were] perceived by them."

"They became sad, and their art ... antiquarian, and their efforts all really a kind of embalming ..." (Stevens 42).

Brian Attebery observes further,

The elves have eons to refine their arts, but they know that anything made by them will crumble before their eyes, including great fortresses like Gondolin and enchanted woods like Lothlorien (60).

Thus, the Elves' creations, no matter how skilled, are subject to the whims of the great evil, just as Sauron is visible to them when he wears the master ring that he has created (Tolkien, Silmarillion 288). When Frodo offers Sauron's finest achievement, the One Ring, to Gandalf, the wizard finds it abhorrent and frightening; it tempts him with its dark call and would overwhelm his reluctance to use it and turn him to evil despite all that he is:

"No!" cried Gandalf, springing to his feet. "With that power I should have power too great and terrible. And over me the Ring would gain a power still greater and more deadly." His eyes flashed and his face was lit as by a fire within. "Do not tempt me! For I do not wish to become like the Dark Lord himself." "Do not tempt me! I dare not take it, not even to keep it safe, unused. The wish to wield it would be too great for my strength" (Tolkien, *Fellowship* 70-71).

Gandalf, something of an artisan himself, if only with fireworks (Tolkien, *Fellowship* 35-6), understands the potency of the Elves' shaping and Sauron's inspiration. Boromir does not, and his craving for it drives him to temporary madness (Tolkien, *Fellowship* 414-15), and it is, of course, Gollum and Samwise who actually affect the One Ring's destruction when Frodo falls to its power. It is easy to understand, then, why the fellowship must be split before all of its members are enthralled by the One Ring.

Ursula K. Le Guin's Ged, in *The Wizard of Earthsea*, like the Elves, has his own flaw, and he yields to superbia when he releases the shadow and violates proper order. Fallen, he can no longer rely on what was once innate ability, and he utilizes the necessary help of the old artisan and his sons to obtain his boat, *Lookfar* (150-1), and for a time, following his own fall from intuitive magic, Ged becomes an artisan himself and plods and labors (70) where he once sailed with great inborn power (66). Also, Vetch/Estarriol, certainly a wizard lacking imagination or inspiration, but who does offer skill and faith (69), is a valuable helpmate to Ged. Further, Ged's triumph over Yevaud, the Dragon of Pendor, is

appropriately the result of research and guess (91), not of insight or inspiration. His strengths becomes the work of grunting and sweating, not inspiration and creativity. His innate magic is restored only when he is reunited with his own Shadow.

In general, artisans can be even less than unnoticed and disregarded "furniture" characters. They are rare enough in fantasy literature to be completely non-existent ones. Many times their crafts exist, but they do not. The simple question of "Who made the Holy Grail?" adequately demonstrates that their products, made for others, are their only value; they have none as individuals. As present or absent servants in fantasy, artisans are barely tolerated and only paid lip service to fill out fantasy's cosmologies. Their talismans are very often absolutely necessary to the fabric of the fantastic, and like many secondary characters, they are at the core of what makes a literary work fantastic. They are major components of "the fabulous," but they are rarely major or even existing players. Thus, major elements of fantasy, like those of any literature, can be defined by what isn't present as much as by what is.

The begrudging and unavoidable recognition of them exists despite the fears that artisans' skills and creations invariably seem to summon (perhaps because of their aforementioned emulation of creation gods) and despite the obvious efforts to keep them outside the main currents of fantasy narratives. Certainly, the literature's antipathy to technology plays a major role in this ostracizing. Andre Norton's fantasies, for example, are very anti-technological (Schlobin xxvi-xxvii) despite her obvious affection for other types of outsiders. Moreover, like many groups that are only tolerated for their usefulness, artisans are frequently made scapegoats and must, then, by definition, be shunned. Since fantasy is a deeply conservative literature, which clings fanatically to and rigidly enforces highly polarized cosmologies and epistemologies, the artisans' skill with mechanics and empiricism must be antithetical to the more typical intuitive and supernatural abilities that stand so much in the foreground. For their non-conforming natures, artisans must be controlled; such power must be limited or both the good and the evil will fall, much as Gandalf could and Sauron did. While this antipathy is assumed or encoded in most fantasy literature, Brian Stableford's The Empire of Fear states it explicitly. In the seventeenth century, Edmund Cordery, a commoner and Mechanician to the Court of the ruling vampires (3, 8), understands that his empirical and scientific knowledge is his primary asset in the commoners' rebellion's attempt to destroy its oppressors. While he is concerned that he may be discovered, he, at least, knows that his old vampire lover, the Lady Carmilla Bourdillon, sees little difference between the artisan and the wizard (5). Thus, he is able to infect himself with the plague (19, 23, 29, 31), which he understands through his newly-crafted microscope, and successfully pass it to the Lady

Carmilla when they tryst (29-32, 78). Thus, the power of the vampires, which they keep shrouded in apparent magic, mystery, superstition, and intimidation (8-9, 13), is threatened by the powers of the mechanist, who the vampires do watch and fear (15-18). Stableford's characters, then, make it clear that the conflict between the artisan and the magician is also one of power and prerogative.

Certainly, the dramatic tension that exists between the need for the artisans and the fear of their misfit abilities pushes them to the fringes of fantasy narrative, if they exist at all. When they do exist, they create an ambiguity, a fusion of opposites, that is at the core of fantasy's aesthetic. In its tension and stress between the real and unreal, fantasy unifies the sweating artisans or their creations, who are familiar to the mundane world, with the mysterious wizards and the superhuman heroes, who are both unfamiliar. Thus, readers are drawn to references they do understand and are lead to new ones that may, indeed, evoke wonder with the conspicuous characters and talismans. Yet, for those readers who are more sensitive to oppression and alienation, there may also be an ancient sympathy for the artisan who labors beyond the fringe.

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PAGAN SURVIVAL: WHY THE SHAMAN IN MODERN FANTASY? 1

Much attention has been focused on fantasy's heroes, whether they are as brutal as Conan or as tender as Samwise and Frodo. However, one of the shadowy, most vital, and recurrent character types, one that strikes deeply into audiences with effects and powers,² has been largely ignored. This is the shaman. While fantasy literature is filled with magic-makers and thaumaturges, there are particular characteristics that separate and isolate the shaman as a separate character type among the garden-variety sorcerers and sorceresses and make shamans among the most intriguing of fantasy's stock figures. At the heart of the shamans' ironic appropriateness is the general and simple narrative movement in most fantasies from a hunter society (where most of the action occurs) to a planter one -- the change from aggressive, individual effort to passive, sustained, and collective achievement.

The shaman, for a variety of reasons, is a natural for the literature of the fantastic, and his presence has numerous thematic, structural, and aesthetic implications. On the most elemental of levels, the archetypal nature of shamans makes them indigenous to any literature that, like fantasy, reaches for primal meanings. And shamans are examples of a pervasive archetype, which historically and anthropologically originated in Siberia and Ural-Altaic and has been at its most powerful in Asian and Arctic communities (Eliade, *Shamanism* 234, 288, 333).

Amid the infantile and simplistic psychomachia that are central to much of fantasy's plots and themes, shamans are the ideal champions of health, life, fertility, and the world of light and the ideal foes of disease, death, sterility, and the world of darkness (Eliade, *Myth* 2:280; Eliade, *Shamanism* 508-9). Their powers revel and function in

... the fabulous world of the gods and magicians, the world in which everything seems possible, where the dead return to life and the living die only to live again, where one can disappear and reappear instantaneously, where the "laws of nature" are abolished, and a certain superhuman "freedom" is exemplified and made dazzlingly present (Eliade, Shamanism 511).

Thus, when such notable thinkers as Carl Jung and Mircea Eliade explain that the shaman has a direct link to the concepts of *syzygy* and the celestial life (Jung 56; Eliade, Shamanism 76-81), fantasy figures like J. R. R. Tolkien's Gandalf in the Lord of the Rings, Roger Zelazny's Sam in *Lord of Light*, Patricia Wrightson's Wirrun in the Ice Is Coming Trilogy, John Bellairs' Prospero and Roger Bacon in *The Face in the Frost*, C. S. Lewis' Merlin and Pendragon in *That*

Hideous Strength, and Stephen Donaldson's Thomas Covenant in White Gold Wielder appropriately come to mind. The shaman thrives in any animistic society, like fantasy's, that is fighting for its survival against the supernatural. Here, the control and understanding of magical forces are absolutely necessary, and social, scientific, and restrictive forces have not yet dominated the imaginative and mythic -- in other words, a hunter-society (Henderson 56). Within the milieu of emergency and baffling events, the shaman often is begrudgingly accepted as the mentor and arbiter of all matters relating to natural law, goodness, and decorum and is the creator and interpreter of the social system of symbolic fantasy (Géza Róheim, The Origin and Function of Culture as cited in Campbell, Hero 101). In times of incomprehensible trouble, shamans are often summoned to heal evil rents in the fabric of the universe. A superficial view, then, respectfully and reverently recognizes the shaman as the specialist of the sacred, the ultimate poet (Eliade, Myths 2:280), and the penultimate power over suspended reality.

Yet, from a more objective view, fantasy's shamans are the leaders in an infantile game in hunter-survival fiction and are the lightning rods of general social anxiety, both for characters and readers. Shamans are sought for solutions, due to the incomprehensible nature of supernatural foes. Shamans fight fantasies (gods, religions, omens, etc.) so the hunter society is free to fight wars and hunt reality with its lesser powers (Campbell, *Hero* 101). Natural foes are fought by warriors and heroes, but once the demons engage, the ranks must part for the shaman's special strengths.

Within the hunter society, one of the strongest indications of fantasy's infantile cosmologies and epistemologies, which focus so specifically and sanctimoniously on the extremes of good and evil, is the relative rarity of the female shaman despite her anthropological reality in Sumatra, Borneo, Germany, India, China, and Japan (Eliade, Shamanism 346, 352, 385 [i.e., Freyja], 421-24, 448-9, 463) and her great frequency in contemporary "circumpolar hunters" (Campbell, Primitive 244, 372, 441). Most recently, Michaela Roessner's Walkabout Woman introduces the female shaman, but it is telltale that her young Raba must struggle against the male usurpation of powers in her efforts to realize herself. Roessner's insight has also occurred in scattered moments throughout Tanith Lee's fantasies (cf. her Birthgrave Trilogy, especially Quest for the White Witch) and in the earlier, stronger portrayals in Andre Norton's Witch World Series. As it is, fantasy's preoccupation with the male indicates the genre's own inability to acknowledge obvious historical and anthropological realities in its often compulsive fascination with moral and ethical simplicities. (Thus, if the rise in the mass popularity of fantasy's simplistic belief system is directly proportional to that of fundamentalist, comfort religions and the misnamed "Gothic Romances," no one should be surprised.)

However, even though fantasy's troubled and threatened communities quickly embrace male or female shamans and other supernatural saviors in times of great stress and conflict, the shamans' very natures make them uncomfortable allies who stretch social conformity to its extreme limits. This is because shamans are not social beings; they are crisis' creatures. They do not incorporate; they are saturated with too much individualism. Shamans do not relate to the whole and cannot integrate with or return to a safe and sane social group. Their vocation is, by its very nature, asocial and is "independent of any human compulsion or agency" (Henderson 72). For example, C. S. Lewis' Pendragon (*That Hideous Strength*) lives apart from the world and maintains greater-than-normal, transcendent ethics, and Tanith Lee's Vazkor is accountable only to his supernatural mother-lover, Uastis, at the end of *Quest for the White Witch* (316-7).

Along with the shamans' individualism, there are a number of other things that make them poor citizens in fictions that embrace and seek the epiphanies and resolutions of the planter societies' ultimate goals of tranquillity and triumph (i.e., utopias). Certainly, within the ever-popular Judeo-Christian cosmology, which permeates most fantasy fiction, one characteristic that makes shamans anathema is their pagan magic. (As early as the third century, Plotinus condemned magic [Cavendish 21]).

Indeed, both male and female shamans are feared by societies (Campbell, Primitive 249) for their extraordinary natures (see note 2) and their more direct relations with the sacred (Eliade, Shamanism 32). A society finds anything that threatens stability intolerable, and it does not respond well to creatures as powerful or more powerful than the gods (Campbell, Primitive 249, 280) it holds in awe. The reason for the lack of identification with the shamans is that they have long discomforted their fellow characters (and society, in general) with their powers, independence (Campbell, Primitive 240), aloofness (Campbell, Primitive 240), needs for periodic isolation, and mystery (a product of their disengagement and isolation [Campbell, Primitive 240, 249]). To have some idea of how fearful and awesome the self-sufficient shamans can be, consider a number of their activities in socially-endorsed fantasies. Within the Judeo-Christian context, humanity's fall from Eden (Eliade, Flight 175) and Lucifer's from Heaven are failed attempts at shamanism and Christ's a successful one (Henderson 68, 225). Shamans, then, are feared because they manipulate powers far beyond the normal, and any being so out-of-step must be watched; they threaten established and hard-won security and expectation.

As a disrupter of order, the shaman is, also, traditionally linked to the Trickster archetype and, as such, does not honor the established orders upon which societies rely for stability and comfort. The titan-demon -- such as Zeus, Loki, or Prometheus -- overthrows or betrays the gods (Eliade, *Flight* 174). Both shaman

and trickster can be the perpetrators of "malicious jokes," violations of expectations. They are often punished for these, and as a result, their lives tend to be in constant peril (Jung 256). John Brunner's Traveler in Black's deadly form of ironic justice is an illustration of such powerful pranks, and Katherine Kurtz's Deryni are an illustration of persecution caused by reactions to their special powers. To lull society's fear and resentment and to protect themselves, shamans do sometimes use more acceptable tricks and entertainments (Campbell, *Primitive* 249). One of the most famous examples of this, in contemporary fantasy, is Gandalf's fireworks (Tolkien, *Fellowship* 33). Another, more life-saving instance, is Sam mesmerizing the monks, in Roger Zelazny's *Lord of Light*, after Yama's murder of Mara (29-32). Other shamans simply maintain as low a profile as possible to protect themselves. C. S. Lewis' Pendragon operates at the fringes of civilization. Megan Lindholm's shamans, in *The Wizard of the Pigeons*, make themselves invisible by becoming members of the one class society deliberately ignores -- street people.

Yet another reason shamans are looked upon with suspicion, antagonism and prejudice –the standard fear reaction to the unknown — is because of the secret initiation rites that create shamans (cf. Gayton passim; Eliade, *Shamanism* 391-2). These events manifest themselves in fiction via painstaking rites of initiation and passage — as in Ursula K. Le Guin's Earthsea Trilogy, Roessner's *Walkabout Woman*, and Patricia A. McKillip's Hed Trilogy — or with *deus ex machina* suddenness — as in Gandalf's sudden reappearance as "the White" (Tolkien, *The Two Towers* 96-8) following his fall to the Balrog in the Mines of Moria (Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring* 345). This tendency to hide the shamans' origins from the reader and for characters to react with fear and suspicion is made clearer in fantasy fiction by the non-supernatural characters' alienation in regard to such figures as John Brunner's Traveler in Black, William Shakespeare's Prospero, and Manly Wade Wellman's Silver John.

However, the greatest reason to distrust shamans' otherness (ironically a characteristic that makes them attractive to fantasy's writers and readers) is that they work in ways and with forces that are unintelligible to ordinary mortals. Shamans are distinguished by their ability to "work behind the veil" (Campbell, *Primitive* 250). Here the shaman works with the "elements" and "ways": causes, understandings, truths, wisdoms, and insights. General humanity sees only the effects and appearances on "this side of the veil," which yield only conformity and social stability. What normal characters do not understand, they mock and distrust. The Miller's unease in Tolkien's *Fellowship of the Ring* echoes the "common opinion" among the Shire's residents that Gandalf and others are "outlandish" (32). Peter Beagle's Schmendrick, in *The Last Unicorn*, is the object of constant derision even after it's apparent his powers are real. Ironically, the very reason why

shamans are mocked and persecuted is why the non-supernatural characters need shamans as mentors, champions, and guides. And this reliance is another reason why shamans are resented for their independence and freedom. Such intolerance occurs because it is very obvious that the shamans can disregard limitations that normal characters (or people) must accept as imperatives and necessities (Eliade, Shamanism 511). The historical manifestation of this reaction to the shamans' superiority and infuriating independence is the social creation of the more controllable and understandable priesthood. Independent thaumaturges were quickly discarded and replaced by controllable, socialized priests as societies developed beyond hunting and foraging into agriculture (Campbell, Primitive 238, 280; Larson 10-11). Priests work with communicable, fixed, and unquestioned appearances, frequently illusions. These illusions are, in turn, often governed by the subjective limitations of the socially endorsed priests and functionaries, who themselves are barriers to real contact with higher powers and who lack perspective and insight (Campbell, Primitive 231; Eliade, Shamanism 4). Priests are not as potent as the shamans -- a point well made in Susan Cooper's Dark Is Rising series by the greater, pre-Christian power of Will Stanton and the "Old Ones" -- but priests are safer.

As fantasies move from hunter to planter societies, then, shamans often are scapegoats and "sin eaters" who cannot be assimilated (or who refuse to be assimilated) into the new, victorious society. The shaman must be excluded just as the tragic hero often must be (Frye 215). However, unlike the hero, who is admired and mourned, the shamans' departures are often signs for relief or further affirmation of the "rightness" of the victorious order. Thus, C. S. Lewis' Merlin, in *That Hideous Strength*, is powerless and disenfranchised. The awesome and primordial forces of nature that lie within his control have been asleep too long and their ancient amorality has no place in the civilized twentieth century (288-89). Le Guin's Ged surrenders his magic to save a world, and most of its people hardly notice. Stephen Donaldson's Thomas Covenant gives his life to save the Land (*White Gold Wielder* 451). Thus, the shamans' individuation is purged by social organizations (Campbell, *Primitive* 242) that move toward the administrative and understandable restoration of a battle well won. Only hunters stress individual effort (Campbell, *Primitive* 242). For the victorious, it is now time to be planters.

It happens, then, in many fantasies, that when the monsters are gone, natural order restored, and there is general celebration for the conquering heroes, shamans leave or are exiled. As action resolves itself, much in the manner of Northrop Frye's comedic (163-86) or Romantic (186-206) mythos, the once-necessary shaman is a discomfort to stable, planter society (Campbell, *Primitive* 231, 241; Eliade, *Flight* 158-9). This occurs even though fantasy's shamans are generally calmer and more poised figures than society's and folklore's ecstatic maniacs.

None-the-less, once the shamans' parts of fantasy's fights against chaos are over, they are pronounced useless. The examples of this in modern fantasy are legion. Gandalf leaves for the West, along with other magical characters, at the dawning of the "Third Age" (Tolkien, *Return* 301-11). Merlin -- whether he be in Medieval French romance, T. H. White's *Once and Future King*, or Robert Nye's bizarre *Merlin* -- is always exiled to some prison. Charles Williams' Prestor John, in *War in Heaven*, appears, heals and restores life, and disappears (253-5). Roger Zelazny's Sam (*Lord of Light* 256), Ursula K. Le Guin's Ged (*The Farthest Shore* 222-3), and Patricia Wrightson's Wirrun (*Journey Behind the Wind* 178) all vanish into conflicting myths and folk tales.

The reasons for the exorcism of these strange loners, these disrupters, are three fold:

- 1. Initially, when the hunter society is threatened or when a planter society must turn hunter to battle a predatory foe, shamans are needed to rebuff incomprehensible, supernatural foes. Thus, shamans are exploited much in same manner as mythology is used to explain the inexplicable, to conquer the unknown. Societies accept, for a time, the fierce and independent shaman out of necessity.
- 2. However, once the victory is won, the shamans are not tame enough to be good citizens. Power must become intelligible and be returned to human agencies. It is as if, having been insecure and frightened, there is a purposeful need to reaffirm, reassure, and re-establish mortal morale. The reminders of perils and vulnerabilities, both the heinous and the virtuous ones, must be banished. Thus, the shamans have no place in the goodness they have been so pivotal in creating.
- 3. Finally, on an aesthetic level, shamans, more than any other character type, capture the true spirit of fantasy's paradoxical and ironic nature (Schlobin xxvi-xxviii, xxx). In this case, the irony is doubled, for, through the expulsion of the shaman, the fantastic denies itself and its own essential nature. Shamans, when they are used, are among the most powerful of fantasy's reality suspending devices -- part of the reason why such literature appeals so strongly to its readers. Yet, in its epiphanies and resolutions, fantasy denies this figure (and many other elements of the supernatural) to affirm the human and the mundane. In these final affirmations, then, comes both fantasy's joy in humanity and also the bittersweet longing for the loss of powerful numina and all the magic that attends them.

NOTES

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²The shamans' powers and characteristics are many and competitive with the gods' (Park 27): transmutation, guidance to the road to immortality or heaven (Campbell, Oriental 284; Eliade, Quest 109) or death (Eliade, Shamanism 208) in conjunction with the primordial mother (Eliade, Shamanism 79), seeing "behind the veil" (Campbell, Primitive 250), polymorphism (Campbell, Oriental 284; Nye 14, 18), liaison with the dead and the underworld (Campbell, Hero 99; Eliade, Shamanism 92, 181, 308, 396), messenger and intermediary of the gods (Eliade, Quest 103-4), immortality through resurrection (Eliade, Shamanism 76, 93-95) and ability to remember past lives, flight and ascension (Eliade, Shamanism 67, 140-41, 143, 200, 289-90, 403-12, 478-82), handling fire (Eliade, Shamanism 313, 335), seeing truth, invisibility (Campbell, Oriental 284), mastery of animals (Campbell, Oriental 400), hermitic and isolated (Eliade, Shamanism 27; Larson 11), controlling weather, freedom to move among worlds (Campbell, Oriental 284), understanding and attracting (Campbell, Primitive 229; Eliade, Shamanism 96-99) animals and animal shamans, insightful, mover in mythical (not historical) Dream Time (Eliade, Shamanism 103, 132), tender heartedness, fashioning from raw elements, creation of ectoplasm (Campbell, Primitive 250), and healing often through art and poetry (Campbell, Oriental 284; Campbell, Primitive 265; Eliade, Shamanism 182, 215-20, 289).

³Thus, shamans work with the "way," not with ideas. A "way" is a path (a method; i.e., the Mystic Way) to higher powers, causes, truth, deities, etc. (Eliade, *Shamanism* 88). It is accomplished through suffering and sacrifice and requires objectivity (disengagement) and direct access to higher powers. An "idea" is <u>fixed</u>, unquestioned appearance, frequently an illusion, often governed by the subjective limitations of the socially endorsed priests and functionaries, who themselves are barriers to real contact with higher powers and who lack perspective and insight (Campbell, *Primitive* 231; Eliade, *Shamanism* 4).

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DANGER AND COMPULSION IN THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS, or Toad and Hyde Together At Last¹

As a fantasy, Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* (1908) engages horror and danger to enhance its celebration of the restoration of natural order (Schlobin, "In Search" 5; Schlobin, "Fantasy" 5:2262-3). In the manner of Northrop Frye's comedic mode (163-86), most, if not all, is re-established and forgiven at the novel's end (Hunt 28), and most accounts and debts are settled (ch. 12, 190-1²). The miscreant Toad is back at home alongside the sylvan river where friendship (Hunt 60; Smith 5:2133-4), loyalty, "animal-etiquette" (ch. 1, 22; ch. 4, 57; etc.), and safety abound. The dark city with its hellish dungeons (made more so by Toad's self-pity), merciless law, and unethical women (cf. Hunt 84-88) is very far away, and no fugitive warrant can reach Toad Hall. The Weasels and Stoats have been defeated in mock-epic battle and returned to proper social position and behavior (Hunt 77-78, 80-1). Toad is "altered" (ch. 12, 190) and appears humbled. All members of the fellowship are respected and feared; the Wild Wood is tamed (ch. 12, 191).

However, to reclaim this proper balance and order, the characters had to pass through the fire of chaos; otherwise, there is no drama, no tension, no suspense. This is a standard technique in much literature. One of the most famous examples is Puck's capstone speech in William Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which he reminds of the horror that might have been were it not for triumphant magic (my *italics* for the horror; my <u>underline</u> for the saving magic – Romeo and Juliet should have been so lucky):

Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf behowls the moon;
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task foredone.
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
Put the wretch that lies in woe
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night
That the graves, all gaping wide,
In the church-way paths to glide.
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecat's team
From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic. Not a mouse

Shall disturb this hallowed house.

I am sent with broom before,

To sweep the dust behind the door.
(V. i. 371-390)

Danger – the gaping grave – is established early in *The Wind in the Willows* with the "Wild Wood" (Hunt 36-7). Mole's willful trip there (ch. 3, 41) and his night of terror in the hollow tree (ch. 3, 44) are harbingers of the greater threat of the "Wide World" of cruelty and technology that lies beyond (ch. 1, 18-19). Even villages, as Toad regretfully discovers, are unsafe (ch. 5, 67). Of course, what stands against this are the characters' fealty and wisdom as well as the country's safe havens, such as the emasculated Pan's sheltering hooves³ and *locus amoenus*, the secure and "comfy" enclosures of Toad Hall, the burrows (ch. 4, 61; ch. 5, 69-70⁴), the kitchens (Hunt 93-6), and the hollow trees for the threatened Mole and Toad. Throughout the novel, conservative, pastoral enclosure is sanctuary and joy (Hunt 53, 91). Venture too far beyond, succumb to the lures of the "Wide World," and deadly peril surely follows. This, of course, is the Romantic conflict between city and country that the Industrial Revolution, in large part, created.

Two of the practices that bind the river haven are education and paternalism. However, both factors are sometimes overshadowed by control (if not outright manipulation) and force. Ideal teaching occurs when Rat tutors Mole early in the novel in "The River Bank": "'And I'll teach you to row, and to swim, and you'll soon be as handy on the water as any of us'" (ch. 1, 24). Their mentor-acolyte relationship (Smith 5:2134) has been likened to Holmes and Watson's (Robson 127) and to that of "apprentice and experienced artist" (Carpenter 167). This, along with Badger's sharing of his wisdom, is one of the benefits of true friendship. In darker contrast, the attitude toward the Weasels and Stoats is markedly different and represents the class struggle inherent in *The Wind in the Willows* (Hunt 75-84). Here Toad wants to "'learn 'em.'" Rat objects, calling for "'teach 'em,'" but Badger affirms Toad's perspective: "But we don't want to teach 'em,' replied the Badger. 'We want to learn 'em - learn 'em, learn 'em! and [sic] what's more, we're going to do it, too!" (ch. 11, 173). Badger is, of course, being the censorious, punitive parent, and his imperialistic approach reeks of *noblesse oblige* and the patronizing attitude of a greater for a lesser. This perspective is further confirmed at the very end of the novel when the Wild Wood's inhabitants use the fellowship to intimidate and frighten their young (ch. 12, 191).

While Badger and Toad's "learn 'em" seems misplaced control within a contemporary perspective, it obviously is part of the theme of doing something for another's good. Sometimes, this is unwelcome or done without the character's knowledge or permission, further extending the novel's paternalism. Badger

unsuccessfully uses his persuasive oratory to try to reform Toad (ch. 6, 87), and Toad's refusal to be corrected leads to dire peril - Toad proves immune to both education and well-crafted reason. Badger's power is not equal to Pan's. Both are benevolent, but Pan's mesmerism has the force of a numen. Pan's gift of forgetfulness saves Rat and Mole from suffering from their own consciousnesses and from their memories of his awe and wonder (Ch. 7, 105 and 108). A negative example of such mesmerism occurs when Rat falls victim to the call of the South. As creatures pack up to move or to journey South, Rat may be internally restless, but he is actually overcome by the external siren songs of the sparrows (ch. 9, 128) and sea rat (ch. 9, 135-8; Hunt 64): "Going South, with the rest of them," murmured the Rat in a dreamy monotone, never looking at him [Mole]. 'Seawards first and then on shipboard, and so to the shores that are calling me!" (ch. 9, 138).5 In contrast to the pedagogical aspects of friendship, Mole returns Rat's earlier tutelage with physical restraint (ch. 9, 138); none-the-less, this is protection and kindness even if it lacks Badger's subtlety, Rat's warmth, and Rat's willingness. Further, in *The Wind in the Willows*, mesmerism is not limited even to the power of a being. Mole's call to home is equally potent and reinforces the novel's insistences on being in the proper place (ch. 5, 69-71) and on supportive friendship via Rat's admiration for his friend's modest abode.

The successful incantational words and mesmerism of Pan and Mole's home's call are juxtaposed to Badger's failed attempt with Toad and to Rat's aborted attempt to journey South. Pan's, Rat's home, and Badger's attempt are all benevolent and well-intended; the sparrows' and sea rat's are innocuous (if potentially dangerous).

Intentions and results aside, these events certainly provide the frame for Toad's lapse and the novel's psychomachia. What makes Toad's compulsion and delusion distinct is that they are, in spite of his friends' best intentions, his own.

Toad is, obviously, an example of the double, and he falls to himself, not others. Rat reveals Toad's dual nature early in *The Wind in the Willows*: "'He is indeed the best of animals,' replied Rat. 'So simple, so good-natured, and so affectionate. Perhaps he's not very clever – we can't all be geniuses; and it may be that he is both boastful and conceited. But he has got some great qualities, has Toady'" (ch. 2, 28). For a time, the "manic-depressive" (Blount 148), solipsistic Toad is harmless, even to himself, as he collects boats and caravans (ch. 1, 21) by the riverside. Even after his almost fatal addiction to the city's motorcars (ch. 3, 37), he remains simply a creator and collector of the wrecks of fabulous flivers as long as he stays within the safety of home (ch. 4, 56) and amid the support of his friends. However, once he escapes his friends' vigilance and takes to the "high road" to The Red Lion Pub in a little village, then, he is in the "new" world (Hunt 41), and he

falls to his addiction and steals (ch. 6, 93). The combination of the city beyond the river and its infernal creations (ch. 6, 87) —which Badger tried to banish when he dismissed Baxter (Hunt 83) — is just too much for the willful Toad.

Toad's compulsion and inadvertent subjugation to the city and its infernal creations are enlightened by comparison to Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (1886), published when Grahame was twenty-four and a gentleman-clerk at the Bank of England (Hunt xi-xii). *Jekyll and Hyde* amplified the popularity that Stevenson had enjoyed with *Treasure Island* (Samuel 497; Drabble, 938, col. 1). David Daiches supplies important information about *Jekyll and Hyde* that indicates it would have been easy for it to have come to Grahame's attention. It

... sold forty thousand copies in Britain during the first six months, and then innumerably more in America in authorized and pirated editions. As Louis's cousin and first biographer, Graham Balfour, recorded, ... "It was read by those who never read fiction, it was quoted in pulpits, and made the subject of leading articles in religious newspapers" (68).

Jekyll and Hyde is the intrusion of the city into The Wind in the Willows. Toad pursues the urban, and thus, his goal and gaol become the London of Hyde and Dickens' Bill Sikes (1837). Toad, like Jekyll (Berman 5:1835-6), is a mixed creature of both good and evil: the Bright One and the Dark Other. 7 Jekyll's evil, prior to Hyde's coming to power and independence of the potion, is controlled by his conscience and probity, Toad's by his friends and environment. However, both fall victim to a potion. Jekyll concocts his narcotic and bane in the nether realm of the laboratory. Toad's automobiles come from the nether realm of the city's factories via the high road (ch. 3, 37). Hyde destroys Jekyll because Gabriel John Utterson and Dr. Hastie Lanyon are either ineffectual or Jekyll does not seek them. Why, then, is Toad saved? Certainly, Toad makes little attempt to save himself. On his flight from prison, in "The Further Adventures of Toad," he illegally commandeers yet another car (ch. 10, 156-7). The difference, of course, is where Jekyll and Toad are headed. The prodigal Toad is saved because he is on his way home to his friends and sanctuary, the ubiquitous theme of the departure and return. Thus, within the comedic pattern of The Wind in the Willows, Toad goes on a dark quest (Frye 186-206) without the usual heroic tools. Fortunately, what he lacks, his friends have. The fellowship of the river has the will and ability, finally, to control him after he has endured the lessons of the city and the road. On one hand, Toad's peril dissolves into rewarding play, as it does in A Midsummer Night's Dream, and the game has distinct winners. The Bright One is revived and saved. On the other hand, Jekyll is dragged into the pit by Hyde and never has the opportunity to escape to the blessed country. The Dark Other prevails.

From a much more recent perspective, Grahame deconstructs (or inverts) Stevenson's Dark Other. However, while Grahame's reading or knowledge could easily have included Jekyll and Hyde, Ferdinand de Saussure's Course in General Linguistics (1916) and Jacques Derrida's De la grammatologie (1967) were out of reach. Yet, such a consideration does point to a far older, cyclic interplay. Grahame's and Stevenson's pre-postmodern world was still immanent, still filled with potent meanings and incarnate symbols. Brian W. Aldiss and David Wingrove accurately describe, in their comparison between Jekyll and Hyde and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein (1818), the dire consequences of the abrogation of individual power (50-51) in a meaning-filled cosmos. More than this, Stevenson and Grahame animate the fall of will to monstrous and overwhelming desire or force, a characteristic that is central to horror literature (Schlobin, "Children" 36). In their immanent realms and continuing to the present day, horror always has done this and fantasy always has been its antithesis. The former destroys the generative will and all its effects; the latter restores it all (Schlobin, "Fantasy" passim.). Hyde's and Toad's desires are equally potent and self-destructive. However, in The Wind in the Willows, Toad has the idealistic benefit of the surrogate powers of his friends; Hyde does not. Thus, the two characters and novels demonstrate that even contemporary deconstruction is part of an older dialectic: Hyde is the deconstructed Bright One; Toad is the reconstructed Dark Other ... or vice versa.

NOTES

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²All text citations are to the accessible Airmont edition of *The Wind in the Willows*. For additional convenience, both chapter and page citations are given.

³For an illustration of a more traditional Pan from one of Grahame's contemporaries, see Saki's "The Music on the Hill" (1911).

⁴This persists despite the contradiction that Badger's burrow is of human construction (ch. 4, 63-4).

⁵The juxtaposition between the Rat of the water and the rat of the sea raises the issue of nature versus nurture, perhaps inadvertently, since *The Wind in the Willows* seems to consistently reinforce nature in its pursuit of "*lack of progress*" (Hunt 77) and restoration.

⁶John Pennington recently observed the multiple occurrences of the double in the nineteenth-century literature preceding *The Wind in the Willows* as he surveyed some of the scholarship (203-7) and observed its kinship with the impossibility, paradox, and ambiguity that are at the heart of much fantastic literature (Schlobin, *Literature* xxvi-xxviii).

⁷Of course, the other major nineteenth-century illustrations of the double as Bright One and Dark Other are Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891). Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* embodies it with Oliver versus Bill Sikes. Ancient illustrations include the Persian Zoroastrianism's gods of light and darkness and the Christian Christ and Lucifer. Faust is a major example of the combination of the dark and bright in one character. Major examples in modern fantasy are J. R. R. Tolkien's Gandalf versus Sauron and Samwise versus Gollum in The Lord of the Rings Trilogy (1937-55) and the Unicorn versus King Haggard and the Red Bull in Peter S. Beagle's *The Last Unicorn* (1968).

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ZELAZNY'S BLACK: THE SIDEKICK AS SECOND SELF By Carl B. Yoke

Cast a mass of molten metal, colored midnight blue, into a larger-than-life, horse-shaped mold. When it has cooled, break it and burnish it carefully.

Then wed the mode by spell to an Elemental (perhaps a demon, but probably a member of a less well-known order) that has escaped from Hell, something that has lived for more than a thousand years and has the skills of the sorcerer.

Add the ability to run and never tire, to shape-shift, to travel on other planes of existence, to shoot fire from the eyes and smoke from the nose, and to detect reality emanations. Make it somewhat telepathic and provide it with a storehouse of secret information.

This is Black, the sidekick of Dilvish the Damned, Elfin hero of eleven stories collected in *Dilvish*, the *Damned* (1982), and of one novel, *The Changing Land* (1981), by Roger Zelazny. Black accompanies Dilvish on his monomaniacal quest to kill the powerful sorcerer, Jelerak, the man who cast Dilvish into Hell.

Black is a sidekick, like Batman's Robin, Sherlock Holmes's Dr. Watson, the Lone Ranger's Tonto, the Cisco Kid's Pancho. Although little has been written about this figure, everyone seems to know that he is, by definition, an associate, a partner in the hero's quest or mission. He is loyal, trustworthy, and willing to subordinate his personal interests and desires to those of the hero.

But he is much more. His contribution to the relationship, though often unnoticed, is substantial. He brings to it talents, skills, or attributes that the hero does not possess, or he performs some function the hero cannot perform. Of course, though he remains humbly self-effacing, he shares in the rewards of the quest. But he is usually also integral to the success of the venture. He is, in many ways, an extension of the hero. Their relationship is a marriage of sorts, a Gestalt that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Black certainly fits this definition of the sidekick. In his most common shape, as the horse upon which Dilvish pursues his evil nemesis, the two are literally paired. Their complementary relationship is underlined by the fact that, though Dilvish decides when and where they will go, Black often acts on his own. He is also markedly more independent in the later stories than in the early ones.

But Black and Dilvish are bound by even stronger ties. They escape together from Hell, which neither could apparently have done alone. Dilvish was there for at least two centuries, and while we never learn how long Black was in Hell or how he got there, he must have been there long enough for him and Dilvish to have developed a trusting relationship and a plan. Moreover, the two are bound by a pact, written out on parchment and sealed with the red-wax imprinted of a cloven hoof.

Black has promised to help Dilvish until they dispose of Jelerak. And while the narrator indicates in the first paragraph of the first story, "Passage to Dilfar" (1964), that Dilvish might have bartered "a part of the soul" for the horse in a Faustian reprise (Zelazny, *Dilvish* 1), their relationship turns out not to be so diabolical. Black burns the pact, for example, as *The Changing Land* closes because he is curious about what will become of Dilvish, since the primary reason for his existence (revenge upon Jelerak) has been removed (239). In other words, Black simply gives Dilvish his freedom. Black's ultimate reward is not the soul of the Elfman, but the knowledge that he has helped Dilvish rid the world of a primary evil.

It is clear that, even if bound by some sort of Faustian pact to Divish, Black possesses the typical characteristics of the sidekick. But is he more? In response to my question about the character of Dilvish, so Zelazny wrote in a 1982 letter:

Dilvish – if you look at him solo – is not that interesting a character, particularly in the earliest stories. He is a humorless monomaniac. Black had to be an ironic commentator if the series were to continue, in order to provide the rest of a single, entire personality... I wrote *The Changing Land* in a month, to get rid of the one thing in his life which drove him. I couldn't stand him any longer the way he was. If I were to bring him back again, he would obviously be radically altered. What happens to a man when his monomania is fulfilled? He can go to seed. He can take off on a new passion. Or he can find a new direction.

Zelazny's comments here illustrate the difficult problems of characterization he faced in trying to finish the series after a hiatus of twelve years or so. He had changed not only as a craftsman but also as a person. The stories were written in two clusters, from 1964 to 1967 and from 1979 to 1982. The result is that there is a considerable difference in texture, mood, language, control of material, perception, and purpose between the earlier and later material.

The relationship between Dilvish and Black was probably initially only conceived of as a Faustian pact. When Zelazny rethought it more than a decade later, it became obvious that Black's role had to be broadened, sharpened, and deepened. He had to become more of a business partner; he had to become an addendum to Dilvish's personality, yet one that would not only maintain a separate identity from, but also provide an ironic contrast to, his master. Black becomes no less than what Carl F. Keppler defines as a "second self."

In *The Literature of the Second Self*, Keppler's landmark study of the double or a doppelgänger, the second self is described as an alter ego exhibiting a contrary condition: it must achieve an external and independent reality while maintaining an inward linkage or continuity with the primary self (9- 10). The

second or companion self is a reflection of humanity's dual psychological nature – in other words, of the division between the conscious and subconscious mindsw.

`Authors use the second self to dramatize the division in their own psyches. The second self, like the subconscious mind, is overlooked, ignored, unrealized, or otherwise excluded from the primary self's self-conception because to examine it is difficult and painful. The second self is a repository of suppressed instincts and emotions that the first self must eventually face if the individual is to achieve mental health. Such a conception is very similar to the Jungian shadow.

Keppler reminds us that while studies of the other as double or doppelgänger tend to focus on its evil aspect, it has in fact both a bad and good side (99), again like the Jungian shadow (Hall 48-51). Indeed, Keppler discards the terms double and doppelgänger because they are mere replication; most of the time the other is not a simple duplicate (2-3). In Black's case, this is true both physically and mentally.

With this primary distinction in mind, Keppler identifies several variations of the second self, both good and bad. There are, for example, the twin brother, the pursuer, the tempter, the vision of horror, the savior, and the beloved. While each of these differs from the others, they all share a set of fundamental characteristics that is also displayed by Black.

Each must achieve an external reality while maintaining an inward link or continuity with the first self. Each must in some way be in opposition to the first self. Each must be surrounded by an aura of the uncanny or unreal (sometimes so pronounced that the second self is truly alien) (Keppler 192). Each possesses secret knowledge or lore unavailable to the first self (10-11). Each appears to the first self at the "moment of its greatest vulnerability," even though the second self may have been present long before its first actual appearance (12). Most importantly, the second self forces the first to grow – it hammers the other, if necessary, into a new shape (200-01). This makes the second-self story almost inevitably a bildungsroman, one of growth and self-enlargement. Even though the second self often brings "turmoil and disaster" to the first (193), the relationship is never broken; rather, the outward destruction leads to inward construction. Though the second self does not consciously shape the first, the result is the same. Black has all the fundamental characteristics of such a figure.

Black obviously achieves an external and independent existence. He appears in the stories in two distinct but obviously related external forms, as well as in an implied additional form. He is most often the midnight black, burnished metal horse upon which Dilvish pursues the evil sorcerer Jelerak. But he also shows up first, in "Garden of Blood" (1979), in human form. As such, he is described as a muscled giant with black, curly hair, a full beard, and eyes of almost incandescent blue. At the same time, it is clear that neither of those forms is Black's true form.

nor do they express his true nature. While it is suggested several times in the stories that Black is a demon, it turns out finally the may well not be. Near the end of *The Changing Land*, Dilvish says, "I sometimes doubt you really are a demon," and Black replies, "I never said that I was" (239). Though Black's true nature is never revealed, there is no doubt that he achieves the principal characteristic of second selves – an external and independent existence.

Like other second selves, Black also shares an inward link or continuity with the first self, in this case Dilvish. Zelazny tells in his 1982 letter that Black becomes an ironic commentator "to provide the rest of the entire personality." It remains, however, to show how the inward link is manifest in the stories.

Typically, Zelazny's protagonists are neurotic as a result of some psychological trauma: betrayal, crossed love, fall from high state, and so on. They are also alienated, a condition that modern psychiatry, coincidentally, classifies as a form of schizophrenia (Johnson 54-55). In other words, they are sometimes physically and always psychologically out of their communities or cultures. In the Dilvish stories, many characters exhibit some kind of duality. Most obvious among them are Strodd and Stradd, the twin sorcerers of "A City Divided" (1982); Devil of "Devil and the Dancer" (1982); Ridley of "Tower of Ice" (1981); and Tuala of *The Changing Land*. This schizophrenic doubtless appears in two forms in the stories: multiple personalities in a single body and/or two separate individuals who form a single personality.

Dilvish is cast in the standard Zelazny mold. He is not merely neurotic but monomaniacal in his pursuit of revenge. He has suffered trauma, having had his body turned to stone and his spirit cast into Hell for two-hundred years because he's tried to stop Jelerak from sacrificing a virgin. His revenge neurosis is a recent direct result of his trauma. Moreover he is alienated. When he returns from Hell, he finds that his family and friends have all died and that he is the last of his house. Previously a gentleman who sang, danced, wrote poetry, and hunted, his former way of life has become impossible, and he must become a wanderer and a soldier, his only companion a strange creature in the form of a metal horse.

Like other Zelazny protagonists, Dilvish must engage in a double quest: a physical one, which satisfies the demands of storytelling and provides him with an experience to promote his change; and a psychological one, which permits the author to make observations about human nature while his character confronts his neuroses. This latter quest is generated by the tension between the character's light and dark sides. His accumulation of life experience helps him merge the desperate sides of his personality into an individual whole that is greater than the sum of its parts. In Zelazny's fiction, experience leads to positive psychological evolution.

Black, like Keppler's "true" second self, is also in opposition to Dilvish in some fundamental ways. This is first expressed in their Faustian pact. Though its

terms are never specified, Black must help Dilvish until Jelerak is destroyed, just as he helped him escape from Hell. What Black will get in return is unclear, though initially it is strongly implied that he will get Dilvish's soul. Neither Dilvish nor, perhaps, Black himself knows that Black will destroy their contract at the end of their adventure, so even though Dilvish professes not to care what happens to himself, that he will eventually have to honor the contract must create tension between them. It becomes more intense as Dilvish realizes that there is life beyond his revenge.

Black's name itself suggests a kind of opposition. Though what kind of being he is is never made clear, he merely represents a dark side of Dilvish or of humanity itself. As "blackness" and "shadow" are strongly associated, Zelazny may have had the Jungian personality complex in mind. For in Zelazny's fiction, the dark side is not necessarily evil. Rather, light and dark represent fundamental oppositions in nature that are at the same time complementary. Where they are called form and chaos, anabolism and catabolism, or creativity and analysis, without them there is no progress, for they are the necessary halves of a more complete whole.

Like the true second self, Black also has elements of the uncanny. Whether he is an elemental or a demon, a devil or embodied part of Dilvish's personality, an archetype from the collective unconscious or something else, he is of a nature unfamiliar to Dilvish. He also possesses secret knowledge. He has traveled on other planes of existence and appears to be familiar with beings unknown to Dilvish. He has lived centuries longer than Dilvish and knows spells unfamiliar to the Elf warrior. Moreover, he appeared to Dilvish at the time of his greatest vulnerability – when his body had been turned to stone and his spirit cast into Hell.

Finally, Black is a true second self because he promotes Dilvish's growth in a multitude of ways. Whether he recognizes it or not, by helping Dilvish to destroy Jelerak, Black is helping him to rid himself of the single most significant barrier to his personality development, namely the monomania of revenge. In "Devil and the Dancer" (1982), Reena, sister of the sorcerer Ridley, tells Dilvish that revenge warps a person, that its pursuit to the exclusion of all other emotions leaves no room for love (and, by extension, growth) (163).

But Black's ministrations also help the Elf warrior grow in another sense. Dilvish plays several different roles simultaneously during the stories. He is symbolically a vegetation god, dressed in green, the color of new growth, and has literally been to Hell but been reborn. He is also a Grail Knight whose task is to heal the wounded land, as is made clear in *The Changing Land*. Here he provides the means by which the evolving Elder God, Tualua, whose traumatic metamorphosis produces the ill effects spreading from Castle Timeless, can rise to a higher level of existence. By liberating the wizards imprisoned in the dungeon.

Dilvish enables them to free the castle from its moorings in space and time and send it reeling into a new creation. Through all of this, Black functions as a kind of medicine man who helped Dilvish gather experience that will bring about his own psychological transformation. Laying his monomania to rest, Dilvish integrates the divergent aspects of his personality and achieves mental health and maturity.

It appears clear, then, that Black as sidekick possesses the fundamental characteristics of the second self according to Keppler. Viewed thus, the sidekick becomes an addendum to the protagonist (who serves as primary self) and functions as a sympathetic and powerful ally who helps the protagonist grow psychologically. Much like the Jungian shadow when it functions in a positive manner, the sidekick as second self provides the individual with the conduit to his or her own instinctive nature, while at the same time helping the primary self survive through adverse and traumatic circumstances.

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"rituals' footprints ankle-deep in stone": The Irrelevancy of Setting in the Fantastic

In certain almost supernatural states, the depth of life is entirely revealed in the spectacle, however ordinary, that we know before our eyes, and which becomes the symbol of it.

Charles Baudelaire, Journaux intimes (1855-56)

Setting does not determine the fantastic. This premise – which some, if not many, may find controversial – points to one of the most striking contrasts between contemporary fantastic theory, on one hand, and critical theory, on the other, in their approaches to setting. Both possess religious vigor, opposite conclusions, and varying degrees of error. Fantasists, with the notable exception of Lance Olsen, embrace setting completely even though it is not a telling element in what necessarily makes any work fantastic. In contrast, contemporary theorists completely deny the traditional approach that setting is meaningful. Thomas Docherty indicates that, by the 1950's and the *nouveau roman*, setting, along with character and plot, were exiled from the novel (x). Along with the demise of character, in favor of the Formalists' and Vladimir Propp's actants (66), many think the dismissal of setting is one of the most startling and erroneous propositions of contemporary narratology.

From a psychological or anthropological perspective, fantasists seem to have the stronger case, especially since contemporary theorists attempt intellectually to negate in literature what has been one of humanity's visceral preoccupations. Both Robert Ardrey, in *The Territorial Imperative*, and Desmond Morris, in numerous works, have suggested that the compulsive demarcation of physical space is buried deep in the psyche and arose as a primary element of survival. Carl Jung indicates that there is an "unknown topological law that rules a man's disposition" (qtd. in Pennick 6). As far back as the middle of the third millennium, B.C.E., the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine described the importance of the practice of Feng Shui, the art of "finding one's place" (Chuen 14). To this day, while residents of Hong Kong will ridicule it, it is the rare individual who will build without consulting one of Fen Shui's masters (Chuen 8). According to it, "The places we spend our lives are part of our existence. Where we are is part of what determines who we are. Our locations have a profound influence on us" (Chuen 53). The British have long practiced the art of topiary, the manicuring and taming of the wild wood into safe gardens of artifice. In fact, Edward Scissorhands' quick clipping mocked this painstaking process as he gamboled about the hedges (1990; Wolkomir 101).

In literature, such focus on setting is known as "topoanalysis" (Bachelard 10) or topological criticism. Someone who avidly pursues the *genius loci*, the spirit of place, and *anima loci*, the soul of place, might be known as a topophiliac. Its devotees would certainly honor Joseph Campbell's indication of the importance of setting in one of fantasy's cohorts, mythology: "The second function of mythology is to render a cosmology, an image of the universe that will support and be supported by this sense of awe before the mystery of a presence and the presence of a mystery" (519). In Western European culture, Hell is the persuasive illustration of the dark power of Campbell's awesome places, as Dante and Milton show, just as Heaven is the bright, if less chronicled (Russell xiv), one. This is further generalized by Etienne Gilson in his introduction to Gaston Bachelard's *The Poetics of Space*: "Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space subject to the measures and estimates of the surveyor" (xxxii).

Certainly, observing immanent, imaginative settings in the fantastic is easy. The "Space Opera" of the 1950's would have been horse opera without outer space and rocket ships (cf. Aldiss, *Space Opera*). The history of horror film would be depleted without the tombs of Egypt, the castles of Transylvania, and the traps of the Gothic. The fiction is generally so visually evocative that numerous artists have turned it into images. Mervyn Peake adorned Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Hunting of the Snark*. Artists, too numerous to mention, have produced illustrated guides to such authors as Anne McCaffrey, Ursula Le Guin, and Roger Zelazny, and web sites are devoted to the visual Middle-earth. Alberto Manguel and Gianni Guadalupi's *The Dictionary of Imaginary Places*, J. B. Post's *An Atlas of Fantasy*, and Malcolm Edwards and Robert Holdstock's *Realms of Fantasy* are only three of the coffee table books that accompany the vivid dust jackets and paperback covers that demonstrate fantasy's topophilia and the desire for mapping's orientation and emarcation.

Scholarship often references this link between the fantastic and its settings. Kenneth J. Zahorski and Robert H. Boyer were early and primary exponents of place as determinant of the fantastic via their taxonomy of High and Low Fantasy, and J.R.R. Tolkien's primary and secondary worlds (37-8) are probably better known than Samuel Taylor Coleridge's primary and secondary imaginations. More recently, Maria Nikolajeva has postulated "closed" worlds in children's fantasy (36). Indeed, places have long been considered more influential than simple settings or locations. Peter Hunt points out that settings in English fantasies often have "extra dimension" due to their associations with actual locations (11), and C. W. Sullivan III adds that references to Welsh mythology and places contribute significantly to the works of such writers as Alan Garner, Nancy Bond, Lloyd Alexander, Kenneth Morris, Evangeline Walton, and Susan Cooper among

others (105). Such visualization of the otherworldly seems as much of fantasy as wizards and elves and supports Brian Attebery's suggestion (while he is focusing on American literature) that "Nearly all fantasy takes place in or postulates another world, in which the fantastic or magical becomes the expected and normal" (*Fantasy* 12 – a point he later modifies; see "indigenous fantasy" below). Colin Manlove adds antiquity to this and says that fantasy has a "preference for older societal and even cosmic structures" (*Christian* 209). Umberto Eco observes that "We are at present witnessing, both in Europe and America, a period of renewed interest in the Middle Ages, with a curious oscillation between fantastic neomedievalism and responsible philological examination" (63). While Eco's observation is open to the question of when interest ever waned – for example, Arthurian literature has sustained medieval settings for over a millenium – it does demonstrate the bubbling topophilia that inspired at least ninety-two entries in John Clute and John Grant's *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*.¹

Such avid attention does have justification. Many fantasies employ an encoded device or devices to explicate its places and their internal laws either along the way, as in most quest narratives and bildungsromans, or at the dénouement, as in most horror. Frequently, when there is not an omniscient narrator at work, these decoders are the wisdom figures and/or guides, such as Raven/Adam in George MacDonald's Lilith (1895), Merriman/Merlin in Susan Cooper's The Dark is Rising series (1965-77), or Virgil in Dante's Divine Comedy among countless others. Christine Brooke-Rose observes that Gandalf is the "great explainer" (237) of Middle-earth and the guide to its environs just as Gilda and the Wizard are of the Yellow Brick Road, Oz, and Kansas in L. Frank Baum's The Wonderful Wizard of Oz (1900). In fact, such insights can even come from very minor characters. Such characters are identified as tellers by David Galef, in The Supporting Cast: A Study of Flat and Minor Characters (32). These characters can be numena, like Aslan in C. S. Lewis Chronicles of Narnia (1950-56); the fire elemental, Sunspark, in Diane Duane's The Door Into Fire (1979); or the little dragon in Daniel Hood's Fanuilh (1974), a retelling of Chaucer's "Franklin's Tale." Other times talismans or arcane documents reveal truths of the environment, such as the ancient tablets that the evil Dorje resurrects from the sands of the Gobi in Talbot Mundy's lost-race novel Jimgrim (1931).

Whatever the nature of the epistemological decoders or maps, the power of the realms of most fantastic literature is undeniable. They are geomorphological concepts, "in which topology or setting takes on powers and attributes that are normally assigned to characters" (Schlobin, "Locus" 29), compulsions, obsessions, and dedications. For example, Brian W. Aldiss observes that the forest of Robert Holdstock's Mythago Wood (1984) represents "the primal folk images of the human psyche" (Trillion 443). Given the sacred importance that forests have had

Since time immemorial (Bachelard 186-7), Stephen R. Donaldson's Thomas Covenant's reluctance to accept it adds measurably to the series' theme of despite and its consistent tone of discomfort and dislocation (1977-82). The *locus amoenus* can be positive or negative (Schlobin, "*Locus*"). In epic fantasy, heroic protagonists can rest amid the green world, but if they remain, the garden becomes deadly, sloth rises, and they cease to be heroes. In contrast, for utopian fantasy, the *genius loci* is eternal fulfillment, such as in the hidden world of James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* (1933) and its movie versions (1937, 1978), in C.S. Lewis' floating islands in the first two volumes of the Space Trilogy (1938-45) and Aslan's land in the Narnia Chronicles (1950-56), in Thomas Burnett Swann's promises of the "Islands of the Blest" at the end of the Minotaur Trilogy (1966-71) and in Tolkien's of the Western Isles in The Lord of the Rings Trilogy.

Yet another sheltered setting, the isolated place, can be salvation or ruination. Creative solitude has been a rare benefit for fantasy's characters despite its productive antecedents for such visionary shamans as Buddha, Mahomet, and Christ (cf. Schlobin, "In"; Schlobin, "Pagan"). One of the rare examples of productive isolation is Roger Zelazny's work, such as the Amber novels (1970-91), in which the characters create their own spaces ("shadow"), only to become ironically subject to them. More often, the anima loci of solitude is deadly. Such is the case with dystopian fiction that embraces the horrific future, such as George Orwell's 1984 (1949), Aldous Huxley's Brave New World (1932), Nevil Shute's On the Beach (1957; film version, 1959), Tim Powers' Dinner at the Deviant's Palace (1985), Lance Olsen's Tonguing the Zeitgeist (1994), and the film Brazil (1985). In them, the entire society or world becomes the Gothic castle, the dark place of no escape. One of the most effective uses of solitude that goes from isolation to resurrection is Gandalf's fall to the Balrog in Tolkien's *The Two* Towers. His sketchily told tale of the torment that turns him into Gandalf the White in the Mines of Moria remains a vast gap of silent cold, desolation, and trial (106).

Of course, the penultimate example of overpowering setting has always been Mervyn Peake's Titus or Gormenghast series (1946-59). The castle is space without significance. Its library has turned to ashes (3), and its "granite domes are elbow-deep in moss" (23). It is truly tyranny of place and tradition. Within it, Titus' knowledge has been predetermined by architecture: "He has learned an alphabet of arch and aisle: the language of dim stars and moth-hung rafters" (2). Titus is "Heir to a crumbling summit: to a sea of nettles: to an empire of red rust: to rituals' footprints ankle-deep in stone" (1). As Colin Manlove has observed, "Huge and heavy, immobile yet alive, the castle ... becomes in fact an organism in its own right" (*Modern* 219). In fact, without the castle, the series would not be fantasy at all.

While there is probably no more potent place than Gormenghast in all of the literature of the fantastic, when the concept of a path set "ankle-deep in stone" is extended, other insights arise. Frodo's departure and return in the geographically-laden Lord of the Rings, for example, can be seen as an inevitable and magnetic progress toward a single place, the Crack of Doom. He is driven from a nest of false sanctuary, the Shire, to a place of true destruction, the Crack of Doom, and then must momentarily return to observe his fellows' restoration of the desecrated Shire before he retires to the Western Isles. Mordor's *locus anima* is paralyzing, fearful fire. As such, Frodo's journey is hardly a quest, as it has been too often misconstrued. It is a staggering crawl with no grail as a prize. Its end doesn't even ennoble Frodo. Ultimately, it is Gollum, with an assist from Samwise, who is the agent of the One Ring's destruction. Frodo is, after all, only the Ring-bearer.

However, as potent as such settings can be, they are not essential ingredients for the fantastic. Peter S. Beagle, commenting on his *The Innkeeper's Song* (1993), shares his apathy toward even fantastic setting:

... those [the characters'] voices, not their landscape, were what truly inhabited me. As long as the world of *The Innkeeper's Song* gave them ground under their feet and a varying and shared folklore and natural history to refer to, I couldn't have cared less whether it even had a name, never mind a geography. I made it as convincing, as substantial, as I could, but it was never supposed to be more than a backdrop, a stage set (x).

Moreover, there are simply too many works set in the mundane world for the otherworld to be seminal, for example, most of Charles Williams' and the Latin American fantastists' and C. S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength* (1945). More contemporary examples include Roger Zelazny's "Last Defender of Camelot" (1979) and "Unicorn Variations" (1983); films and television series like *Highlander*, *Forever Knight*, *She-Wolf of London*, *Friday the 13th*, and *The Legacy* as well as all the Indiana Jones' variations; Megan Lindholm's *The Wizard of the Pigeons* (1986); Beagle's *A Fine and Private Place* (1960) and "Farrell and Lila the Werewolf" (1971); and R. A. MacAvoy's *Tea with the Black Dragon* (1983). Brian Attebery calls this "indigenous fantasy" (*Strategies* 129) and describes it as follows:

Of all the subgenres to emerge within fantasy in recent years, the one that promises to reshape the genre most significantly ... is characterized by the avoidance of the enclosed world Instead, these fantasies describe settings that seem to be real, familiar, present-day places.

except that they contain the magical characters and impossible events of fantasy (126).

Such seemingly antithetical, if not anachronistic, combinations mirror the sometimes tortured conceits of the Metaphysical poets and appear to deny the mingling of appropriate characters and settings that seem to be part of Mikhail

Bakhtin's chronotope (Holquist 425-6).

However, although such use of ordinary settings may be conspicuous lately, it is not new or recent (no more than Eco's aforementioned "neomedievalism" is). Franz Kafka's Der Verwardlung was published in 1915. Thorne Smith's Topper (1926), David Garnett's Lady into Fox (1922) and The Man in the Zoo (1924), and Don Marquis' archy and mehitabel (1927) are all over seventy-five years old. Science fiction and lost-race (cf. Vasbinder) and feral-child fictions immediately push the date back further, for example to Jules Verne's Journey to the Center of the Earth in 1864, which is hardly otherworldly, or to much of Edgar Allan Poe's, Nathaniel Hawthorne's, and H. Rider Haggard's canons. Italo Calvino's recent anthology, Fantastic Tales: Visionary and Everyday, reinforces this by his selection of representative fantasies with mundane settings by fourteen nineteenthcentury authors,² in which there are only glimpses of other worlds, "enchanted or infernal, behind everyday appearances" (xi). A less precise definition might include the everyday of Gilgamesh's cedar forest or Ulysses' reconstructed travels. In fact, the Gormenghast Trilogy itself, despite its wildly idiosyncratic characters, is fantastic only as a result of its vastness, complexity, and oppressive tradition.

Michael Swanwick's "The Dragon Line" (1988), yet another of the continuing revisions in the 1,500 years of Arthurian fiction and a combination of fantasy and horror, provides an excellent illustration of the fantastic disassociated from setting because it combines a dystopian everyday with the mythological and the supernatural yesterday. Moreover, anyone who has traveled through its actual locations in Pennsylvania knows that Swanwick's vivid and realistic descriptions are very effective renditions, not fantastic creations. The action takes place in contemporary Philadelphia and King of Prussia. Modred, the first-person narrator and protagonist, shields his true identity behind a corporate labyrinth. He drives a Jaguar through Swanwick's many mentions of contemporary places, landmarks, and streets and runs a young "asshole" in a Trans Am off the road (431). The story's climax and the nexus of the lung mei are set in the center of Getty Gas and are lit by "six smoky flames, waste gases being burnt off in gouts a dozen feet long" (431). The genius loci of Swanwick's dystopian setting is filth, corruption, and corrosion. The setting is darkly and venomously powerful with implications vaster than Gormenghast, but it is otherworldly only when the three stand at the nexus Merlin has summoned.

It is a didactic, pro-ecology tale that encodes the past via its main characters: Modred and his antagonist, Merlin. Its climactic scene is set at the nexus of the tracks of groundstars or as Merlin explains, "In China ... such lines are called lung mei, the path of the dragon" (432). Modred has exhumed Merlin, a natural force "even in this dim and disenchanted age" (427), from his cave, much as he is in Lewis' That Hideous Strength. Initially, Modred attempts to bind Merlin with the Medieval powers of the liege lord (427). This is almost all of Swanwick's uses of the past. More strikingly, he revisions Arthurian mythology by making Modred Merlin's grandson. Merlin had slain Uther Pendragon's babe and substituted his own; the dead (not sleeping) Arthur was hated by his people. Modred is the altruist who, despite his best efforts, cannot save the world from ecological disaster. Further, Merlin is not the savior Modred had hoped: it is Merlin and his Collegium that have brought Earth's environment to its knees and substituted artifice for nature (433). Swanwick's third character, Shikra, is from other traditions entirely. She is named for a raptor, a goshawk, indigenous to India where it is trained to capture other birds, often wounding them severely in the process. The seventeen-year-old Shikra is Modred's daughter and Merlin's granddaughter and shares a cocaine habit with Modred. Cocaine is the title's double-entrendre: it refers to both the path of the dragon and a line of the drug. Shikra is a mulatto, a "petite teenaged monstrosity" (424): coarse, foul-mouthed, ignorant, brash, and street smart. She is a trained assassin armed with a butterfly knife and an immortal like Merlin and Modred. "She has that rough, destructive energy that demands she be doing something at all times" (427). It is she who inflicts the sexual wound upon Merlin when he attempts to bind her and Modred to his will; this is Swanwick's only other bow to tradition as he alludes to the sexual potency necessary for high magic and to the myth of the maimed vegetation god and the Fisher King.

Like Shikra's personality, the setting of "The Dragon Line" isn't even remotely fantastic. This example of Attebery's "indigenous fantasy" depends on its characters, especially the two secondary ones, and on its allusions to and revisions of the past for its sense of wonder, not on its setting.

So setting does not discern the fantastic; it never has.³ It can only establish it just as white pigmentation can establish human but does not discern or determine it. Thus, both the fantasists and the narratologists are too extreme. Campbell's assertion that one of mythology's functions is to create a cosmology does not apply. Swanwick (among numerous others) didn't have to create place; he just looked and recorded what he saw. Campbell's cosmology does not crossover to the fantastic. Perhaps, Ardrey's and Morris' identification of the urgency of delineated space passed when possession of it became a matter of law rather than combat.

What, then, does establish the fantastic if not setting? Kathryn Hume is very helpful here. Amid her discussion of the uses of the fantastic, she observes that readers, via engagement and disengagement (57), are more influenced by state of mind than by setting (55-81, esp. 81). The pivotal phrase here is "state of mind." What both the mythological and the fantastic require and use is not cosmology, but epistemology: how the truth is known and who knows it (even when it's impossible). This is the center of the fantastic's "fuzzy set" (Attebery, *Strategies* 12-3). The key to the fantastic is how its universes work, which is sometimes where they are, but is always why and how they are.

NOTES

¹Afterlife, Alternate Realities, Alternate Worlds, Arcadia, Archipelago, Borderlands, City, Crosshatch, Cthulhu Mythos, Dreamtime, Dying Earth, Dynastic Fantasy, Eden, Edifice, Faerie, Fantasyland, Fountain of Youth, Gameworlds, Garden, Golden Age, Hades, Heaven, High Fantasy, Imaginary Lands, Into the Woods, Jerusalem, Labyrinths, Land, Land of Fable, Landscape, Lemuria, Library, Limbo, London, Los Angeles, Lost Lands and Continents, Lost Races, Maps, Microcosm/Macrocosm, Mines, Minneapolis, Moon, Multiverse, Never-Never Land, New Orleans, New York, Oak, Olympus, Oriental Fantasy, Otherworld, Oz, Paris, Pastoral, Planetary Romance, Poictesme, Polder, Portals, Posthumous Fantasy, Purgatory, Recursive Fantasy, Rivers, Ruritania, San Francisco, Secondary World, Secret Empire, Secret Garden, Shangri-La, Shared Worlds, Ship of Fools, Shop, Steampunk, Sword and Sorcery, Thinning, Thresholds, Time Abyss, Transylvania, Trees, Underground, Under the Sea, Underworld, Urban Fantasy, Urban Legends, Utopias, Valhalla, Venice, Visionary Fantasy, Wainscots, Waste Land, Water Margins, Wonderland, Wrongness, and Xanadu as well as subentries within Children's Fantasy and Fantasy.

²Edgar Allan Poe, Hans Christian Andersen, Charles Dickens, Ivan Sergeyevich Turgenev, Nikolai Semyonovich Leskov, Auduste Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Guy de Maupassant, Vernon Lee, Ambrose Bierce, Jean Lorrain, Robert

Louis Stevenson, Henry James, Rudyard Kipling, and H.G. Wells.

³ Fantastic setting can even be completely irrelevant and thus not central to any definition. Randall Garrett's Lord Darcy stories (1979) are set in a world where magic works, but the crimes, although they appear supernatural, are mundane and are unraveled by Holmesian logic. Even though setting is fantastic in Garrett, it is insignificant to the meaning of the action. Furthermore, horror frequently uses everyday settings to maximize its violation of the expectations of safety.

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THE LOCUS AMOENUS AND THE FANTASY QUEST*

One of the best known historical parallels is the one between Medieval-and-Renaissance romance and epic and modern fantasy. The quest, the journey, the archetypal departure-and-return are critical elements in this parallel. Often, these are combined with utopian and dystopian visions, which range from the vapid immaturity of Eden Phillpotts' *The Lavender Dragon* (1923) to the macabre originality of Jack Vance's Dying Earth series (*The Dying Earth*, 1950; *The Eyes of the Overworld*, 1966; and *Cugel's Saga*, 1983). The horrible, dystopian dangers of the quest have received much attention. However, there are also very pleasant, utopian dangers that have not been discussed. Among these is the ancient tradition of the *locus amoenus*.

In its benign and delicious form, the *locus amoenus*, or pleasant place, is characterized as a pastoral, Arcadian, languid, and utopian place. It is the pleasant, green world that recalls, if not recreates, the Edenic state. Ernst Robert Curtius, in *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, inventories its contents as a tree or grove, a meadow, a spring or brook, one or more *numen*, and sometimes a temple or castle dedicated to the Goddess Natura. Northrop Frye, in *The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays*, further identifies it with the youth and innocence of the hero; he describes it as a place of seed rather than growth. The *locus amoenus* is a geomorphological concept, in which topology or setting take on powers and attributes that are normally assigned to characters. Thus, as the sealing of the love grotto by the church in Gottfried von Strassburg's *Tristan and Isold* illustrates, such places were thought to have both positive and negative power over the actions and emotions of human beings.

In the older literature, examples of the *locus amoenus* abound. In the *Aeneid*, there are Elysium (VI, 638) and the forests that are cut for Misenus' funeral pyre (VI, 179ff.). In Chrétien de Troyes' *Chevalier de la Charrette*, Lancelot creates his own idyllic place when he wanders enraptured in the forest after discovering three of Guinevere's golden hairs in a comb. Also in the Arthurian tradition, Nimue's call to Merlin is one of the more erotic versions. John Keats' "Endymion" represents one of the best of the Romantics' frequent use of the "pleasant" place.

In the modern era, James Hilton's *Lost Horizon* (1933) and its movie versions (1937, 1978) represent the most well-known uses of the *locus amoenus*. The floating islands in the first two volumes of C. S. Lewis' Space Trilogy (1938-45) and Aslan's land in the Namia Chronicles (1950-56) are further examples. More utopian versions occur in Eden Phillpotts' *The Lavender Dragon* (1923), in promises of the "Islands of the Blest" at the end of Thomas Burnett Swann's

Minotaur Trilogy (1966-71) and in the Western Isles in The Lord of the Rings Trilogy. The most persuasive version is found in J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring* in the "trees of the Naith of Lórien," which Haldir identifies as the heart of the ancient realm (paralleling the Christian Eden):

They were standing in an open space. To the left stood a great mound, covered with a sward of grass as green as Spring-time in the Elder days. Upon it, as a double crown, grew two circles of trees: the outer had bark of snowy white, and were leafless but beautiful in their shapely nakedness: the inner were mallorn-trees of great height, still arrayed in pale gold. High amid the branches of a towering tree that stood in the centre of all there gleamed a white flet. At the feet of the trees, and all around the green hillsides the grass was studded with small golden flowers shaped like stars. Among them, nodding on slender stalks, were other flowers, white and palest green: they glimmered as a mist amid the rich hue of the grass. Over all the sky was blue, and the sun of afternoon glowed upon the hill and cast long green shadows beneath the trees.⁵

In commenting on modern literature, W. Warren Wagar, in *Terminal Visions: The Literature of Last Things*, explains that this desire for the perfect place results from a retreat from stress, a need for peace, and a fear of the beast of technology.⁶ Thus, it's a post-holocaust and utopian escape from dystopian reality. One can easily imagine that *The Land of Cockayne* appealed to the Medieval monk for much the same reasons, and Wagar's analysis offers quality insights into William Morris' *News from Nowhere*, Phillpotts' *The Lavender Dragon*, and Michael Moorcock's *The Quest for Tanelorn* (1975). Mircea Eliade, in *The Sacred and the Profane*, is more topical when he

finds nudism and movements for sexual freedom indicative of the 'nostalgia for Eden,' the desire to rest in the paradisal state before the Fall, when sin did not yet exist and there was no conflict between the pleasure of the flesh and conscience.⁷

Yet as attractive as the *locus amoenus* is, Frodo cannot be allowed to stay there with Galadriel any more than Chre {tien's Lancelot can be permitted to wander in the woods. The garden that gives only pleasure is no place for heroes who must be about their business. It is as deeply dangerous as the coils of the serpent or the time-altering hollow hills of the Celtic fairies. Its languid, dreamy state is misdirection personified; it is idleness and sloth, not purpose or success. It is closure. As Frye points out, the seed (the hero) must be uprooted by the quest to achieve the experience it requires. The energy and achievement that follow are prime products of the *felix culpa*, the Renaissance perspective that views the Fall

as the most important step on the way to humanity. In the Fallen World, the hero can not return to Eden. To do so would be to reject the humanity that the hero strives so mightly to affirm.

Again, the older literature supplies ample examples. Calypso's cave in the *Odyssey* and the Garden of Idleness in the *Roman de la Rose* are two obvious ones. It's questionable, however, if anyone before or since has used the seductive garden as successfully as Edmund Spenser did in *The Faerie Queene*. Book II offers lure upon lure to its protagonist, Guyon. The Castle of Jealousy (II, ixx) and the Ambiguous Isle of Fortune (II, xii) are only two of the perverted Edens and dangerous *loci amoenus* that beckon Spenser's paragon of temperance. In fact, in the Deadly Garden of Proserpina (II, vii; the anti-garden of Adonis), Spenser even offers a vision of what a totally fallen Eden would be -- death, rather than life, breeds in it. This decadent vision is, interestingly, echoed in Jack Vance's Dying Earth trilogy (1950, 1966, 1983). At the end of Book II, Spenser summarizes it all through Genius at the center of Acracia's Bower of Bliss:

goodly beautifide

with all the ornaments of Floraes pride

Wherewith her mother Art, as halfe in scorne

Of niggard Nature, like a pompous bride

Did decke her, and too lavishly adorne

When forth from virgin bowre she comes in th'early morne.

(II, xii, 50)

Spenser's juxtaposition here is, of course, between Nature and Artifice. In the heroes' quests, rest is artificial; striving is natural. Fulfillment can only come through achievement. Kathleen Williams, in *Spenser's World of Glass*, makes a critical observation here. She indicates that the appeal of the *locus amoenus* "is not to our impatience of what is sound, natural, and wholesome, but to our very wish for it." The point is that perfection does not exist in the fallen world. Any place or person that promises it offers only deception, sensuality, debilitation, illusion, and death-in-life and is calling only to childish wish fullfillment.

In modern fantasy, there are numerous illustrations of the attempt to distract heroes from their quests through the illusion of the perfect place. The most striking occurs in Nancy Kress' *The Prince of Morning Bells*. A vapid young princess leaves her doting parents to go in search of the "Heart of the World." Her search is postponed by her marriage to an oafish "jousting jock," as well as by other static activities, and is resumed only in middle age following her husband's death. Her companion, Chessie, a sarcastic prince-turned-into-Labrador-retriever, points out the dangers of such innocent visions of idyllic worlds and preoccupations when he describes the third and most subtle danger of the quest: "Gyve from the Middle English word for fetters or to fetter; origin unknown.

Enchainment. Cloistering. Caesura. Captivity. Arrestment."10 Heroes are

supposed to be single-minded. There is no room for rest.

Once defined, illustrations of the danger of the locus amoenus fall from modern fantasy as apples would from the tree at the center of the garden. One, among a number in Tolkien, has already been mentioned. Sybel, in Patricia A. McKillip's The Forgotten Beasts of Eld (1974), must reject her garden of innocent beasts to discover herself and the world and to become a person. Likewise, in McKillip's Hed Trilogy (1976-1979), Morgan must leave his sleepy little kingdom if he is to find his destiny as a "riddle master" and a god. The Golden City always lies beyond Robert E. Howard's Conan (1950-1954); his destiny is to strive, not to rest. All of Michael Moorcock's "Eternal Heroes" must wait until they achieve union before they can enter a place of real peace in *The Quest for Tanelorn* (1975). Mossey and Tangle cannot pause in George MacDonald's "The Golden Key" (1867). In Roger Zelazny's Eye of Cat (1982), William Blackstone Singer rots in retirement until the alien Cat forces him to summon the energy necessary for fulfillment. Stephen R. Donaldson's tormented leper in the two Thomas-Covenantthe-Unbeliever trilogies (1977-1983) discovers in White Gold Wielder (1983), the last volume, that he cannot escape his geis (destiny, compulsion) in even the Edenic Andelain. Desecration and the Sunbane follow him. 11 Covenant, like all heroes, must meet his apocalypse. To refuse would strike at the very heart of heroic fiction.

So, in modern fantasy and elsewhere, the perfect place becomes the worst place. It is an "infantile fantasy state, a refusal of the effort required to achieve a real human krasis; it is a false, premature or regressive Eden." 12 It appeals to all the excesses that endanger dedication and to what Carl Jung perhaps exaggeratedly identifies as the greatest of human passions, idleness. 13

Spenser paints a horrible portrait of what happens to those who lose the energy and purpose of the quest, those who choose to rot in the stasis of the *locus amoenus*:

See the mind of beastly men, That hath so soon forgot the excellence Of his creation, when he life began, That now he chooseth, with vile difference, To be a beast, and lacke intelligence.

(The Faerie Queene, II, xii, 87)

It has often been observed that while fantasy deals with empirical impossibility, it energetically embraces psychological reality. ¹⁴ Also, fantasy is supposed to unify ambiguities and contradictions. Less astute observers have labelled it escapist. The functions of the *locus amoenus* affirm the observations of

the astute and negate those that call fantasy an escape. Oddly, readers of heroic fantasy may enter non-empirical "reals," but they then reject perfumed, mindless, and seductive illusions that disrupt energy and achievement. While it could be said that such experience is a substitute for real-life striving, the concept of fabulation, as advanced by Robert Scholes in *Structural Fabulation*, demonstrates the highly functional nature of such "new, fantastic knowledge." Fabulative fiction is "fiction that offers us a world clearly and radically discontinuous from the one we know, yet returns to confront that known world in some cognitive way." 15

Thus, the reader's dual experience -- being at once in the fantasy realm and in the world "we know" -- generates perspectives that only the fantasy experience can evoke. These unusual perspectives are carried back to everyday activities with important epistemological effects. This is yet another indication that fantasy is a powerful source of effective and functional knowledge. ¹⁶ In the case of the quest and the *locus amoenus*, the life understanding is clear. The "comfortable place" is like Sylvia Plath's "Bell Jar." Those who choose to remain in the safety and comfort of a closed place reject growth and any hope of a place in history or literature.

NOTES

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¹One of the best discussions of this is Raymond H. Thompson's "Modern Fantasy and Medieval Romance: A Comparative Study," in *The Aesthetics of Fantasy Literature and Art*, ed. Roger C. Schlobin (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982), pp. 211-225.

²One of these is the Jungian "Nixie." See my "Thomas Burnett Swann's Nixies: Pain and Pleasure," *Extrapolation*, Spring 1983, pp.5-12.

³Ernst Robert Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, 1948 (rpt. in a translation by William R. Trask. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1953), p. 195.

⁴Northrop Frye, *The Anatomy of Criticism: Four Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 200, 205.

5J. R. R. Tolkien, *The Fellowship of the Ring, Being the First Part of the Lord of the Rings*, 2nd rev. ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1965), pp. 364-65.

6W. Warren Wagar, Terminal Visions: The Literature of Last Things (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 141.

⁷Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, 1957 (rpt. in a translation by Willard R. Trask, New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1959), p. 207.

8Frye, p. 205

⁹Kathleen Williams, Spenser's World of Glass: A Reading of The Faerie Queene (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), p. 74.

10Nancy Kress, *The Prince of Morning Bells* (New York: Pocket/Timescape, 1981), p. 120.

11 Stephen R. Donaldson, White Gold Wielder: Book Three of the Second Chronicle of Thomas Covenant (New York: Ballantine, 1983), pp. 339-76.

12Williams, p. 73.

13C. G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 2nd ed. Trans. R. F. C. Hull (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 27.

¹⁴Most recently by Gary K. Wolfe in "The Encounter with Fantasy," in *The Aesthetics of Fantasy Literature and Art*, ed. Roger C. Schlobin (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1982), pp. 1-15.

15For a fuller discussion of the nature and effects of "fabulation," see Robert Scholes, *Structural Fabulation: An Essay on Fiction of the Future*. University of Notre Dame Ward-Phillips Lectures in English Language and Literature, Vol. 7 (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), especially p. 29.

¹⁶For more information on fantasy as a growth activity, see my "Preparing for Life's Passages: How Fantasy Literature Can Help," *Media & Methods*, November 1979: 26-27, 29, 50-51.

DARK SHADOWS AND BRIGHT LIGHTS: Generators and Maintainers of Utopias and Dystopias

The search for the sources of utopias and dystopias - their generators and maintainers – requires a consideration of others' suggestions before arriving at. perhaps a simpler distillation of their bright and dark hearts. However, before preceding even to that, it is important to observe that utopia is, almost certainly, fantasy in its conception and realization, and dystopia science fiction, horror, or reality in its. Richard Gerber, in Utopian Fantasy, observes that "utopian creations tend to be fantastic because their civilizations are so unheard that they cannot be placed anywhere on earth without being wildly incongruous; while, as soon as placed among the stars or in the future, they become even more fantastic, because they are out of our reach of knowledge" (86). While Brian Attebery disagrees and contends that "Utopias attempt to show how mankind could satisfy all needs, whereas fantasy, as Tolkien says, exists not to satisfy desire but to awaken it" (8), the failures of real-world utopias, such as the Ephrata Community, New Harmony, Brook Farm, and Oneida Community, and the minor successes of religious communal societies, such as the Hutterites, do seem to indicate that the ideal world remains beyond human reach and, at their essence, are fantasy, whether they pursue Isaac Asimov's opposing Foundations or Stephen R. Donaldson's freedom from "despite." Of course, in heroic fantasy, the seductive languor pleasant place is anathema to the hero (Schlobin, "Locus" passim). Dystopia, the nightmare to utopia's daydream, is very real and is mimetic literature, especially since the Holocaust.

For their inspirations, it seems appropriate to begin with someone like H. G. Wells. He observed that "Throughout the ages the utopias reflect the anxieties and the discontents amidst which they were produced. They are, so to speak, shadows of light thrown by darkness" (119). Paul Ricoeur echoes Wells and suggests that at "... a time when everything is blocked by systems which have failed but which cannot be beaten ... utopia is our resource. It may be an escape, but it is also the arm of critique. It may be that particular times call for utopias" (300). Beatriz de Alba-Koch examination of utopian novels in nineteenth-century Mexico builds on Ricoeur's unspecified "systems" to assert that, during the Mexican civil strife from 1857 to 1871, "many Mexicans felt that their society was 'blocked' and in need of utopias" (17).

Given this discontent, emphasized in dystopias and alleviated in utopias, it becomes difficult to specify the exact nature of inspiration, but there are numerous attempts. Tom Moylan, drawing heavily on the theories of Ernst Bloch, suggests utopias are "expressions of unfulfilled desire resisting the limitations of the present system and breaking beyond with 'figures of hope' not yet realized in our everyday

lives" ("Locus" 165). This type of conflict has long been outlined by the Marxist dialectic, but that has not prevented some from trying to reinvent it under different titles and descriptions. Lyman Tower Sargent's asserts that dystopias, while not being anti-utopias, do recall pleasant, contrastive pasts (138). Moylan outlines further resurrections of thesis-antithesis from Søeren Baggeson and Hoda Zaki ("Global" 186). Christian Marouby calls these the "paradigmatic oppositions" that distinguish savagery from civility (150), such as "order/disorder; hierarchy/anarchy; teleological/repetitive time; accumulation/consumption, etc." (150). For Frederic Jameson, Utopia is "a symptom and reflex of historical change" and a reaction to culture ("Progress" 149). Of course, the penultimate example of antithetical extremes existing simultaneously is C.S. Lewis' *The Great Divorce* (1945) although Hell is hardly a dystopia in Judeo-Christian thought. In *The Great Divorce*, the condemned and the saved occupy the same space with vastly different comfort levels.

Another approach is that "the ideological and the utopian are inextricably intertwined" as in Samuel Delany's *Triton* (1976) and *Star Trek* (Golumbia 91). Fredric Jameson more emphatically asserts the ideological purpose of science in utopias (*Seeds* 77), an observation supported by N.I.C.E. and its "Head" in C. S. Lewis' *That Hideous Strength* (1945) and numerous other works.

In the postmodern and poststructural world, there is considerable support and discussion of utopianism as a rebellion against elemental and ideological tyrannies of gender and color with their socially oppressive languages and symbols (Ketterer 97, Guerin 199). For example, Hélène Cixous' Le Nom d'Oedipo. Chant du corps interdit (1978 -- The Name of Oedipus. Song of the Forbidden Body) and Christina Wolf's retelling of the Cassandra myth, Kassandra (1983), both describe intelligent and sensible women who come into conflict with social norms and taboos so intensely that "they are rendered mute" (Brügmann 41). Sally Gearheart's *The Wanderground* (1978) describes a female utopia arising when "the earth finally said 'no" to men's exploitation, viciousness (Fitting 103), and law, which parallels J. S Bradford's much earlier Even a Worm (1936), in which the animal kingdom raises up against all of humanity. Elizabeth Mahoney explains how women challenge gender-inherited power and culture-specific power in Margaret Atwood's The Handmaid's Tale (1985) and Vlady Kociancich's The Last Days of William Shakespeare (1990), respectively (29-30) just as Christine Brooke-Rose's Out (1964) creates a world in which the "Coloured" are masters. While these examples may seem negative or exclusionary, that doesn't mean that postmodernists reject utopia. Tobin Siebers is much less specific about the utopian goals of this era but that doesn't blunt the desire: "Postmodernists, then, are utopian not because they do not know what they want. They are utopian because they know they want something else" (3). Further, Wilfred Guerin, in exploring

psychoanalytical feminism, observes, "French feminists who follow Lacan, particularly Hélène Cixous, propose a utopian place, a primeval female place which is free of symbolic order, sex roles, otherness, and the Law of the Father and in which the self is still [?] with what Cixous calls the Voice of the Mother. This place, with its Voice, is the source of all feminine power, Cixous contends; to gain access to it is to find a source of immeasurable feminine power" (204).

For David Ketterer, American society was a hoped-for utopia that has. disappointingly, violated expectations and become a dystopia (23, 94); the penultimate example of this is Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown." Ketterer indicates that this explains the messianic impulse, the search for a panacea, in Kurt Vonnegut's novels, especially in Cat's Cradle (1963) (296), and Robert A. Heinlein's Stranger in a Strange Land (1961). This disillusionment with the American dream may also explain why an increasing number of negative novels and films are set in California. Interestingly, Roger Zelazny deconstructs this messiah or superman in Lord of Light (1967) with his reluctant and quickly departed protagonist, Sam. Zelazny, also, demonstrates the perils of world making in both Isle of the Dead (1969) and the Amber series (1970-91). Arthur C. Clarke demonstrates the irony of saviors in Childhood's End (1953). One of the more whimsical of utopian heroes is the dragon in Eden Phillpotts' The Lavender Dragon (1923). He steals peasants away to his own anti-feudalism village where they prosper, become self-sufficient, and ultimately mourn when he, much in the manner of Beowulf, dies slaying an evil dragon that threatens them. Not being an American might explain why J. R. R. Tolkien never gets interested in messiahs at all, preferring that a gardener be the destroyer of Sauron's potential dystopia.

In William Gibson's cyberpunk trilogy – *Necromancer* (1984), *Count Zero* (1986), and *Mona Lisa Overdrive* (1988) – the dystopian control is supplied by international corporations and criminal organizations. They contend with utopian revolutionaries for control of an information matrix that is the key to economic and social control (Moylan, "Global" 187).

Another way the dystopian is inspired is through greed and its resultant dehumanization. Harold Nicolson, in a contemporary review of *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), indicates dystopia is quick to follow those who allow their "humanistic heritage to be submerged in a flood of Materialism" (Meyers 257).

Christian Marouby explains that only by perceiving themselves as the delivers of order to savages could the European justify colonialism (150-2), yet another way one person's utopia is another's dystopia. Interestingly, one of the contemporary reviews of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, Frederic Warburg, inadvertently stressed this when he observed that one of Orwell's failures was that "he nowhere indicates the way in which man, English man, becomes bereft of his humanity" (Meyers 247 – Warburg's stress).

Patrick Parrinder explores a body of work that indicates that physical beauty through eugenics as the utopian goal and inspiration (1), seemingly indicating that ugliness is dystopian.

Finally, the dystopian can be self-inflicted as King Haggard and Mommy Fortuna prove in Peter S. Beagle's *The Last Unicorn* (1968) or as numerous malcontents demonstrate in John Brunner's Traveler in Black short stories (1971).

To summarize from this, perhaps, selective survey, dystopias and utopias certainly pervade everywhere and can be produced by the following: reactions to anxieties and discontent, suffering and pain, blocked and failed social systems, tyrannical languages and symbols, oppression of gender and color, dehumanization, loss of the American dream, science and machines, materialism, antithetical cultures, ideologies, and colonialism. They can also be produced by natural historical conflict and by the pursuit of human autonomy, change, control of information, and beauty. Finally, they can be self-inflected or self-generated.

However, none of these eighteen seem to cut to the seminal impulse. Eric S. Rabkin comes close when he suggests, using Ann Rand's *Anthem* (1946) as an illustration, that the death of "I" is central to dystopia (5). The logic assumption would be that the life of "I," then, is central to utopias. Thus, all dystopias "struggle with a paradox: individuality is messy, inefficient, harmful to others, and often just as harmful and distressing to its possessor. Freedom is necessary for individuality. Making man into a happy machine, however, robs life of its sense of meaning. Freedom blights happiness for many people, but insured happiness for the greatest number can only be achieved by abolishing freedom" (Hume 111). This explains why the majority of the characters in the television series *The Prisoner* (1967-68) are happy in The Village, their gilded cage, which appears to them to be utopia but is actually dystopia.

Certainly, individuality, whether exalted or thwarted, is central to both utopias and dystopias. As a result, both deal with personal and collective history in different ways. Marouby says that "It is a well known characteristic of [seventeenth- and eighteenth-century] classical utopia that it has no history. A static society artificially created once and for all in its perfect state, and for this very reason impervious to change, utopia is fundamentally ahistorical" (159). However, if utopias are visionary, his conclusion does not extend to nineteenth-and twentieth-century examples. Of course, an immediate example of a dystopia attempting to control the individual by controlling history, and eliminating the past, is George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* and its "doublespeak." In contrast, and as further support for a utopian awareness of history, Peter Fitting argues for self-awareness and for "utopian visions as a mobilizing imagery in the struggle for a more human world because they help us to articulate exactly what we are struggling for and what we understand by a qualitatively different society" (101).

Jack Zipes adds action to the mix when he indicates "... the fairy tale has always projected the possibility for human autonomy and eros and proposed means to alter the world" (3). Finally, and if only for comic relief, Kurt Vonnegut, in *Player Piano*, provides a definition of self-realization and utopia as myopic as anyone's. As Finnerty watches the aftermath of the luddites' abortive rebellion against all machines, including their foolish destruction of even the bakery and the sewage plant, he observes, "If only it weren't for the goddamned people ... always getting tangled up in the machinery. If it weren't for them, earth would be an engineer's paradise" (313).

The final clue for the actual essence of the utopian/dystopian is provided by Thomas P. Dunn and Richard D. Erlich. They observe that human triumph is not a foregone conclusion in

recent dystopias and in novels, films, and stories with strong dystopian elements. In such works, the hive or machine or hivemachine becomes an important feature or the major setting for the work. The hive or machine is the essential condition of human life. To resist the hive or machine is to rebel against the entire social system, and, as often as not, the protagonist is crushed, destroyed, or rendered trivial. In such works, the hive or machine becomes the symbol for the things in human life that can render us helpless, insignificant unhuman. This, we believe, is why so many recent dystopian or generally pessimistic works stress images of containment and restricted movement, and why allusions to insect societies are so frequent. And this, we believe, is why so many recent works, dystopian and pessimistic, have a central theme in which the protagonist is imprisoned, or bound, or allowed to walk free only on the condition of perpetual surveillance or control. We find literal binding of the protagonist, or strong capture- and containment-imagery, in every major work we have looked at (49).

There are those who believe such inescapable entombment, like Room 101 in the Ministry of Love in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* or the dentist's chair at the end of the film *Brazil* (1985), is the archetypal human phobia. It is not. Loss of control is (which demonstrates that dystopia is a subset of horror – cf. Schlobin, "Children"). Thus, utopias will always celebrate the power of individual will, and dystopias will negate it. Their appeals, then, are sharing the wish fulfillments of the enfranchised and empathizing with the nightmares of the disenfranchised, respectively. Their inspirations are not the eighteen, narrower ones listed earlier although they all point to variations of this essential characteristic. Rather, in utopias, the inspirations are the perceived needs to exercise the will in the reverie of the ideal

world to escape or create in and, in dystopias, to mourn or satirize the impotency of the will to free itself from the dark world.

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CHILDREN OF A DARKER GOD: A TAXONOMY OF DEEP HORROR FICTION AND FILM AND THEIR MASS POPULARITY¹

Violence . . . demonstrates the "real" nature of man, his fundamental disorderliness and will to destruction, his hatred of constraints, his resentment of ideas and all other artificial constructions. Hence the artist who deals honestly with violence becomes a kind of nose-rubber or mirror-holder, someone rubbing the spectator's nose in the disagreeable, and holding up a mirror in which he can contemplate the essential filthiness, nastiness, and beastliness of mankind . . . (Fraser 109).

Due in large part to the videotape and cable television revolution, horror literature and film are experiencing a popular renaissance in the past ten years that overshadows even its unusual rise over the last four decades. Such celebration by so many consumers in book stores, theatres, and homes raises intriguing and ugly questions about the nature of its popular appeal.

Unfortunately, the term "horror" has become a cliché and is bandied about far too carelessly,² even by scholars. For present purposes, the phrase "deep horror" will be used to identify this popular fascination and to distinguish it from the merely shocking or terrifying and from the traditional intellectual roots of horror and further to stipulate its significantly dreadful character and appeals. Less catchy labels, if more articulate ones, might be the communication of devastation, chaos, desolation, or dissolution. (It is what Freud called "the uncanny" [219]). Also, any association of deep horror with the long scholarly tradition of the Gothic and horror misleads into intellectual perspectives and does not lead into the nature of the current, popular phenomenon. It applauds the scholar, but ignores the people. Bonamy Dobrée, in his introduction to the Oxford University Press edition of Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, is helpful in specifying deep horror's distinctiveness when he says that "Terror and horror are so far opposite, that the first expands the soul, and wakens the faculties to a high degree of life; the other contracts, freezes, and nearly annihilates them" (as quoted in St. Armand 2). Thus, according to Dobrée's definition, what is commonly called "horror" is terror. His definition of "horror" is much closer to what will be considered here as deep horror.

Regardless of label, deep horror is a nightmarish, seminal offering that endures in both the conscious and the unconscious and ultimately must destroy any aesthetic distance to be successful for the frequently craving or cowering multitudes. Deep horror's basic law is that existence is completely nihilistic and

entropic. Humanity and the humane exist only as prey, and deep horror threatens "... the intact psychological system that takes its strength from life" (Hillman 48). Within a Judeo-Christian cosmos, this experience is "demoralization": faith and redemption are ineffectual, and penance becomes only pointless pain. Within a scientific context, it is regression (Brustein 194), "de-evolution" to an uncivilized state. Deep horror is not the scion of the art of Poe and his fellows; rather, it descends from the popular spectacle of the public execution. A vicious weapon, it exploits its audiences through a sometimes exulting, sometimes degrading, always evil repugnance that St. Augustine identified as foul, corrupt, ignorant, and chaotic (*Confessions* 67, 73). Deep horror's demand for its audiences' emotional involvement is great, and when it strikes, it does so deeply. Thus, it will return again and again in daydreams and nightmares. It shakes and disrupts.

Deep horror in its independent, fully aroused form will have no happy endings (as much fantasy and science fiction do). The human characters may survive but only as scarred beings who have paid terrible emotional and psychic prices (Northrop Frye's desdichado, figures of misery or madness [238-39]). Their reactions are not mere shock, unease, or discomfort. They and audiences are not just unnerved, as they might be by some of Robert Bloch's fiction, such as "The Night Before Christmas." Rather, for many, deep horror sends marrow-chilling, cold-sweat messages that often compel running for the exits, closing the book, or changing the channel. Its messages often are the childhood traumas and nightmares that pass into adulthood as vital and destructive phobias. For others, deep horror communicates an exulted return to the primitive, lawless jungle where irritations and insecurities are resolved through mayhem and the wild hunts of vigilantes. For either group, the rationale is always adolescent for the usual audience, "mindless children" (Thomas 135). Deep horror constructs situations that require a simplistic philosophy of absolute good and absolute evil, of wrathful and absolute justice -- all critical keys to understanding its appeal.

Deep horror presents problems (other than its uncivilized and non-intellectual nature) of definition for scholars of genre and taxonomy because of its multiple audience appeals and the topicality of many of its ephemeral appeals. Depending on the audiences' points of view, it may, on one hand, terrify and, on the other, exult. Thus, it mutates frequently and cannot be expected to follow the firm lines that some modes and genres do. Further, scholarly and literate audiences, by their very natures, *observe* film and literature and often treat it as Camp (i.e., *The Abominable Dr. Phibes*, 1971, and *Dr. Phibes Rises Again*, 1972). This reflective, self-conscious perspective almost requires that scholarly assessments of the appeal of horror include such generative concepts as catharsis (Durgnant 880) and contend that defeat of its monsters is a purgation of the fear of the nonhuman (Thomas 135) or that it" . . . frightens us out of fear [and fear of

death] and frees our fancy to find the truth more surely" (Dillard 37). These may be correct for scholars on busmen's holidays, but they are not for the primary focus of this study; the mass audience that swells movie theatres and has made Stephen King a millionaire. Hopefully, it was not the literati who increased the attendance to *In Cold Blood* eighty-nine percent two days after an actual murder (Boyanowsky, Newston, and Walster 235) nor was it some white-haired English professor who the noted film critic Roger Ebert observed enthusiastically relishing a woman being "repeatedly cut up, raped, and beaten" during a showing of *I Spit on Your Grave* (54). Yet, too often scholars want to make deep horror "subcultural" (Dickstein 34), ignore its mass appeal, and attribute some astonishing social values to it.

For the mass audience, deep horror is a *participatory* experience, one that deeply involves personal responses. Within this context and to promote the disruptions and inversions that are its most prominent effects, deep horror must violate established, civilized expectations of law, safety, normalcy, security, and sometimes self. Like Shakespeare's Iago, it lures with appearances and then strikes with chaos, generating fictions that audiences must accept as incarnate symbols. Rosemary Jackson has observed that it "empties the "real" of its "meaning," it leaves signs without significance" (68). Jackson is partially correct here, and such films as the *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956; novel by Jack Finney as *The Body Snatchers*) and *The Stepford Wives* (1975 from Ira Levin's novel) do strip the assumed meanings from what societies perceive as the "real." James B. Twitchell arrives at similar conclusions to Jackson from the opposite direction and says that horror "... is the art of generating breakdown, where signifier and signified can no longer be kept separate ..." (*Dreadful* 16).

More importantly and what Jackson and Twitchell omit, deep horror substitutes meanings. Rather than leaving signs without significance, they are filled with new, inverted, and deadly meanings, which may be repugnant to one mentality and attractive to another. The important point here, regardless of Jackson and Twitchell's disagreement over the relation between sign and meaning, is that horror's imaginings (as well as fantasy's) are what the Enlightenment and Newtonian universes tried unsuccessfully to kill with reason. As Stephen King has put it, terror "arises from a pervasive sense of disestablishment, that things are in the *unmaking* [my stress]" (*Danse* 22), which must be followed by an unnatural and unholy *making*.

The two predominant sources of terror and deep horror are the archetypal and the topical. The former is best known to scholars. For example, the archetypal figure of the Ultimate Adversary³ and its modern permutation, the Bomb, or the fear of entombment have been effective regardless of place and time. Satanic possession and intrusion (more seminally, this is loss of control) continually are

successful in such works as William Butler Yeats' "The Second Coming" (1920), Charles Williams' *Descent into Hell*, William Peter Blatty's *The Exorcist* (film version, 1973), Thomas Tryon's *The Other* (film version, 1973), Ira Levin's *Rosemary's Baby* (film version, 1968), and Jeffrey Knovitz's *The Sentinel* (film version, 1977).

Topical or contemporary horror is less well known to scholars of sustained ideas because of its continually shifting appearance and place in popular culture (i.e., the drive-in movie). As social norms and popular cosmologies have changed, so frequently does deep horror's content or surface appearance. It was, for example, possible at one time to devastate someone with God's wrath, as Job and Lucifer were, or with fear of damnation. Now, the angry, Old Testament God has, for the most part, been left behind, perhaps because the cosmic struggle for souls is no longer a vital, contemporary issue. At one time Washington Irving could be effective with a headless horseman (1818). Now Irving's horse has been replaced with possessed vehicles (i.e., Stephen King's Christine; the movies Duel [1971] from Richard Matheson's novel], Maximum Overdrive [1986], and Killdozer; Dennis Etchison's "It Only Came Out at Night"; and the anthology Car Sinister [ed. Robert Silverberg, et al.]), and while Irving's sylvan New England is sometimes preserved (i.e., Charles Grant's Oxrun Station and Greystone Bay), it also has been displaced with more modern, urban confinement, as in Fritz Leiber's Our Lady of Darkness and the film C.H.U.D (1984). Other illustrations of contemporary concerns are the use of advertising in Leiber's "The Girl with the Hungry Eyes" and in Frederik Pohl and C. M. Kornbluth's *The Space Merchants* and of therapy and shock treatments in Ken Kesey's One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest.

Clearly, such topical horror must be continually conceived and reinvented. Since it is so ephemeral and so overexposed, yesterday's fear softens to today's laughter and affection as audiences are desensitized through repetition and their own desires to seek release from fear. Thus, Bram Stoker's Count Dracula and Nosferatu's dread monster (1922) are "feminized" (Hollinger 16) and emasculated into Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's benign and urbane Saint-Germain, Suzie McKee Charnas' humanized numen in The Vampire Tapestry, and the tanned sheik in Love at First Bite (1979). Abbott and Costello can turn Frankenstein (1948) and the Mummy (1955) into burlesque dupes and "straight men," and Transylvania 6-5000 (1985), Old Dracula (1974), and Young Frankenstein (1974) spoof yesterday's terrors. The transition from Michael Landon in I Was a Teenage Werewolf (1957) to Michael J. Fox in Teen Wolf (1985) must be an illustration of the reduction from bathos to nadir.

Sociological shifts are further compounded in the United States through the nature of the horror Epicureans themselves. Of the small portion of the population

that reads at all, horror readers constitute a small subgroup, although an avid and vociferous one. Fans of horror cinema are much more numerous, and their palates constantly crave gorier and gorier sequels (such as those of *The Amityville Horror*, *Poltergeist*, *Jaws*, *Friday the 13th*, *The Nightmare on Elm Street*, *Alien*) to awaken dulled tastes and sensibilities. Such well-schooled respondents respond with yawns to effects that will give innocents nightmares for weeks. Thus, a movie like *Terror in the Aisles* (1984) or a videotape like *Zombiethon* (1986), which contain "only the good parts," will draw many demanding fans to pay to view a narrated series of clips. A social parallel to this phenomenon is the Christianization of the pagan All Hallow's Eve/Halloween from one of the deadliest nights of the year (James 227-28) to the domesticated and disinhibited All Saints' Day and "Beggars' Night." These transformations illustrate why what might terrify a particular era's audience might reduce another's to giggles.

As mentioned, deep horror can be archetypal or socially ephemeral, the former being far rarer. For the scholar, what depends on the contemporary is effective but is only a pretender. Archetypal deep horror has verisimilitude; it is as old and as enduring as fear itself. Faddish masqueraders pass away to join *The Creature from the Black Lagoon* (1953). For example, despite any sense of justice, the Vietnam war is not a fully effective way to shake the young people of the 1980's. They simply don't know about it, and a film like *House* (1986; sequel, *House II*, 1987) will only work because of its visual, not its emotional, content. The scholar crowns deep, archetypal horror the most valuable of horror art. However, popular audiences anoint continually innovative shocks, each one more dreadful than the last, as their kings. Regardless of perspective, both audiences respond to essentially the same identifiable settings, victims, threats, and appeals. It is their reactions and appreciations that are dramatically different.

THE ABERRANT WORLD

Although they usually appear normal on the surface, deep horror's worlds are aberrant. The normalcy is an important soporific for the characters and necessary both to lull viewers or readers into emotional vulnerability and complacency and/or to prepare the soft ground for savagery. This initial familiarity will always turn into a death trap. Thus, Charles Grant's Oxrun Station appears to be a pleasant New England town, although it does possess the antiquity that frequently stylizes and encodes deep horror's settings, age which soon is revealed to be decay. Shirley Jackson's town meeting in "The Lottery" is the classic illustration of the appearance of normalcy, as is Frederik Pohl's "Spending a Day at the Lottery Fair."

What, however, is most important is that the environments must be closed and sealed. The audience must admit, for itself and the characters, that there can be no exits, no escapes. Both must accept the psychological (and the resultant

physical) immobilization and helplessness as occurs for Griselda in Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale" and the unsuspecting in Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* (film version: *The Haunting*, 1963), Joyce Carol Oates' *Bellefleur*, Michael McDowell's *The Elementals*, and Charles L. Grant's *The Nestling*. At the same time, effective suspense requires the existence of a futile hope for or vision of sanctuary, as in Jean Paul Satre's *No Exit*. This effect of place is an example of Gaston Blanchard's shaping of mind and psyche by space and environment (19). This resultant unity of place and psychological state creates, as Lovecraft has observed, "A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread" within which there is "a malign and particular suspension or defeat" of those "safeguards against the assault of chaos . . ." (15). A more scholarly description is Northrop Frye's final stage of irony, the demonic epiphany:

The dark tower and prison of endless pain, the city of dreadful night in the desert, or, with a more erudite irony, the *tour abolie*, the goal of the quest that isn't there," a "blasted world of repulsiveness and idiocy, a world without pity and without hope . . . (239).

The Gothic holds the preeminent literary model of this. Manfred's dark castle in Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* traps its victims. In its basic nature, the castle is the fear of living burial, the ultimate choking claustrophobia. It is a sentient pit within which the victims may exhibit frenzied activity but where their efforts will never yield release. Modern illustrations are F. Paul Wilson's *The Keep* and Stephen King's "The Mist," in which the protagonist can neither see nor find a way out, or King's *The Shining* (film version 1980), in which the elements and geography make escape impossible, much as they do with the mead hall in *Beowulf*. This makes it clear that the dystopian novel and film, such as George Orwell's 1984, Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, Nevil Shute's *On the Beach* (film version, 1959), and the film *Brazil* (1985), are a subset of deep horror, in which the entire society or world is turned into the dark place of no escape.

Within this closed world, natural order seems to initially prevail. Elemental bonds should exist among lovers, families, and community members, as in Ramsey Campbell's *The Doll Who Ate His Mother* and the numerous examples of the demonic birth. Quickly, however, cracks will appear in the veneer, and deep horror oozes its way to the surface -- first in small drops, later in great outpourings. In Stephen King's *'Salem's Lot*, a normal looking school bus holds young vampires, and in *Cujo* and "The Monkey," the happy moments and companions of childhood are inverted. Jack Williamson's *Darker Than You Think* begins with a normal airport scene that is touched by the seemingly ritualistic slaying of a kitten (encoding what's to come) but ends with the assurance that normal humanity will be totally overcome by a group of shape shifters. Suddenly, Pandora's Box is opened, and the supposedly coherent world cracks apart, becomes

incomprehensible. All expectations of control are lost to chaos and anarchy. Time, in deep horror, has no future. There is only an oppressive present that never improves. In the horror environment, the audiences' conceptions and perceptions of causality, temporality, and cosmology are violated, maimed, and distorted. Friends and allegiances are either proved false or nonfunctional; support groups become cadres of strangers. In Jack Finney's *The Body Snatchers* (original film version, as *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, 1956), no one can recognize even his or her own relatives. Ultimately, this complete cognitive disruption turns what was once thought to be reality into illusion and leads to dangers that can be neither anticipated nor combated.

Deep horror's closed, nihilistic cosmos is filled with seemingly countless mutations (-->):

evolution --> de-evolution
hope --> futility
promises --> lies
salvation --> annihilation
eros --> lust
overtures --> plots
sensuality --> the erotic and pornographic
sexuality --> aggressiveness (Dickstein 33)
intimacy --> intrusion
seduction --> rape
relationships --> traps
nurturing --> oppression
opportunity --> despair
expectation --> despite
freedom --> bondage.

Within these, "evil is real and . . . the thinking man breaks his heart trying to solve its [evil's] compatibility with the existence of a good God or his own glimmering perceptions of Goodness" (Fiedler, *Love* 418).

THE PROTAGONIST-VICTIM

Curiously, deep horror's virtuous or normal characters are the least complicated of its aspects. However, as will be shown, they are another of the critical keys to deep horror's appeal. It would be simple enough to say that these characters are necessary for audience empathy, that they provide narrative perspectives. Unfortunately, much of deep horror (especially the stalk-and-slash variety) require that audiences see through the eyes of the monsters (cf. Derry 47, Dickstein 33): Leatherface's in *The Texas Chain Saw Massacre* (1974), the voyeur's/camera's in *Peeping Tom* (1962), the aliens' in *Creature* (1985) and *Aliens* (1986), and, most absurdly, the shark's in *Jaws* (1975) and the bear's in *Grizzly*

(1976). Also, by definition, sympathetic monsters do not exist in deep horror from any healthy perspective even though empathetic and identifiable monsters exist from a distorted perspective. So empathy, either with victim or monster, is not the complete answer. It shifts too much with audience response.

What is important is that these characters offer familiarity and that they are victims or scapegoats. In this, the monster and the victim have a uniquely intimate relationship. The monster wants in; the victim must open. The monsters master and mesmerize victims. For example, in Robert Bloch's "Enoch," Robert A. Heinlein's *The Puppet Masters*, Robert Silverberg's "Passengers," and Harlan Ellison's darkly erotic "Broken Glass," try as they might, the humans cannot deny possession and manipulation.

Deep horror's normal human protagonists do not have to be innocents waiting to be ravaged, although they sometimes are. They can be both sage and adept. Sheri S. Tepper's female protagonist in *The Bones* knows that she should call upon her support group of witches, but a foolish agreement with her husband and past transgressions delay her (80). The characters need not even be particularly vulnerable in any human sense. Sometimes, in fact, they appear to be improved by their relationships with monsters, as is Arnie in Stephen King's *Christine* (film version, 1983). In all deep horror, however, the monsters' powers will overwhelm any strength. The characters experience what Randolph Otto described as *mysterium tremendem* (19-23). Here, it does not lead to enlightenment or divine union. They also are late to see the ravishment coming, like the young man who is chemically changed into a snake in the film *Sssssss* (1973). The audience will usually anticipate the danger sooner than the characters to promote the dramatic irony so common to the horror genre.

These characters, often the audience's scapegoats, soon discover that their expectations, epistemological systems, and positive efforts no longer work. For example, in the otherwise disappointing remake of *The Thing* (original, 1951; remake, 1982), Kurk Russell's heroic sacrifice to save humanity is nullified by the final scene of the monster, in the form of a sled dog, running across the tundra away from the burning camp and toward unsuspecting civilization. Business-as-usual, even heroic business-as-usual, will just not yield any results in deep horror. Expected effectiveness is simply torn apart. The characters' (and sometimes the audiences') expectations of redemption are overwhelmed, and they are devastated morally and mentally (and often physically). They are carelessly and insensitively tossed into the abyss of nothingness (Schlobin, "Fantasy" 2261). A prime illustration of this is the jogger in *Scream and Scream Again* (1975) who, after he collapses, awakens and reawakens from anesthesia in a hospital -- each time he is missing more and more body parts.

When the characters are triumphant, the art is not deep horror but generative comedy. So too, tragedy cannot be deep horror because tragedy's characters are sacrificed for valuable causes. The audience witnesses what it expects should be (Affron 54). In deep horror, the victims must be elementally violated, and this is most effective when they have been rendered completely powerless (Dickstein 32, Durgnant 880). Self control and assertiveness are useless, and surrender is inevitable despite all efforts. The self is completely and unredemnedly dissolved as in Daniel Keyes' *Flowers for Algernon* and the most recent remake of *The Fly* (1986). The rape-murder of his wife by a masked husband in the film *Jagged Edge* (1985) is a distillation of deep horror's anonymous, nonredemptive sundering of all things human: spirit, soul, inner being, love, intimacy, and body. Such scenes put audiences in the same place as the voyeur in *Body Double* (1984), who must view through a telescope the mutilation of the object of his erotic fantasies.

This violation is even more dreadful when it's made clear that the victim is fully aware of what's happening. Such a realization of helplessness, of complete denial of the ego and the id to the astonishment of the superego, may come slowly as it does for Fortunato in Edgar Allan Poe's *The Cask of Amontillado* (1846); or subtly, when the characters in *On the Beach* (1959) realize they are all dying slowly; or suddenly, as do the final realizations (and the audience manipulation inherent in them) in the films *Soylent Green* (1973; from Harry Harrison's *Make Room! Make Room!*) and *Brazil*. Small narratives of such moments occur throughout Michael Moorcock's dark Elric series; the protagonist's black sword, Stormbringer, drinks its victims' souls as they watch. It is telltale that the sword finally turns out to be a disguised version of Satan. Deep horror's victims are taken by deadly plagues, infections that crawl far deeper than just the flesh.

THE MONSTER/THREAT

Deep horror's monsters and threats come in all guises. They may be modern chemicals and ancient mythologies, as the chemical fumes (that cause the "leakers") and fell dragon in Peter Straub's *Floating Dragon*. They can be deities like the possessive Satan or H. P. Lovecraft's Elder Gods whose contacts with humans produce annihilation. They can be dementedly human, as is Norman Bates in Robert Bloch's novel *Psycho* (film version, 1960), Walter in Chaucer's "Clerk's Tale" (Patient Griselda), and Manfred in Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*. They can be the particularly abominable babies and children as in Tepper's *The Bones*, John Wyndham's *The Midwitch Cuckoos* (film version as *Children of the Damned*, 1960; film sequel *Village of the Damned*, 1963), William March's *The Bad Seed*, David Seltzer's *The Omen* (1976), *Logan's Run* (1976 from Nolan and Johnson's novel), *It's Alive* (1974, sequel *It Lives Again*, 1978), and the astonishing *Inseminoid* (1980). They can be archetypal, such as the reptile in Bram Stoker's *The Lair of the White Worm* and Straub's *Floating Dragon*, the nixie in Fritz

Leiber's "The Girl with the Hungry Eyes" and Stoker's *The Jewel of of Seven Stars* (film version as *The Awakening*, 1980), the femivore in various vampire novels (Tepper 221-2), or the entombment in Edgar Allan Poe's "The Premature Burial."

Indeed, even a partial list of punishments these threats exact is a litany of depravity: incest (cf. Twitchell *Forbidden*), disfigurement, cannibalism, vivisection and dismemberment, death masquerading as life, impotence, sexuality with "unholy consequences" (Stableford 2334), and vertigo. Illustrations abound. Death-in-life is the zombie in the films *White Zombie* (1932), *Voodoo Island* (1957). The plague in *Night of the Living Dead* (1968) produces cannibalistic ravers. "Unholy sexuality" is the hypnotically erotic power of the nixie and the bluebeard (femivore) in vampiric form, whether it be from the dominant male perspective or the occasional female one, as in *Dracula's Daughter* (1936), Whitley Strieber's *The Hunger* (film version 1983), Colin Wilson's *The Space Vampires* (film version as *Lifeforce*, 1985), Lee Killough's *Blood Hunt*, Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla*, and Martin H. Greenberg and Charles G. Waugh's recent anthology *Vamps*.

However, these monsters and threats need not be supernatural, gory, physically threatening or brutal, as Twitchell (*Dreadful* 24) and R. E. Foust have insisted. In deep horror, their powers may be economic (Moretti 78-9), emotional, psychological, or intellectual. Neither Stephen King's St. Bernard (Cujo) nor Alfred Hitchcock's birds (1963) are from beyond this world. Anti-intellectualism has created the Mad Scientist, but there is nothing brutal about Dr. Morbius and the Krell in Forbidden Planet (1956). Faust, Victor Frankenstein, and Dr. Jekyll are not savages. Science and technology have been threats in D. F. Jones's Colossus: The Forbin Project (film version as The Forbin Project), Wargames (1983), and the numerous instances of wronged ecology run wild as the result of ill advised and insane experiments. The important point is that deep horror can exist without any supernatural or even physical force. However, there is an important and necessary consideration here, especially when dealing with popular taste. As Robert Brustein has observed, it is possible that superstition has been "crudely transferred from magic and alchemy to creative science, itself a form of magic to the untutored mind" (193).

What deep horror's monsters and threats must be is obviously and unquestionably evil and immoral, *seemingly* incomprehensible, and utterly capable of disintegrating a self. They usually and mistakenly appear to come from outside the realms of reality. Much, if not all, of the audience believe monsters are primordial intruders, marauders, outsiders who attack human vulnerabilities. Even as venerable a critic as Leslie Fiedler has erroneously identified the monster as alien and fallen for mass audiences when he commented that "... the abominable, to be truly effective, must be literally unspeakable" (*Love* 121).

Audiences that decide to identify with the victims (as opposed to the threats) cannot accept any insight into the monsters' natures or motivations, for deep horror appears to contribute nothing to the definition of human (Schlobin, "Fantasy" 2263). For them, for example, the nature of Claggert's attack upon Herman Melville's innocent Billy Budd must be complete mystery. If deep horror made obvious sense, familiarity would impair the fear of the unknown and make the dangers, at least, mentally understandable, thus generating a degree of control. Here again, perspective plays a critical role. When the beast Grendel was modernized in John Gardner's novel of the same name, it became sympathetic. Also, even though Frankenstein's monster is the abomination of a child born of a male, it and King Kong (1933) are too sympathetic, too much the folklore of Beauty and the Beast, to be among deep horror's true threats. Further, the idea that a vampire couldn't help itself and didn't relish its erotic power and eternal life would spoil deep horror if it ever gained creditability among horror mavins.

However, as alien as deep horror's monsters may seem, they are created by humans and have places in human minds (even though they are not consciously accepted as such and must be disguised by audiences [Toch 1]). They are mirrors of humanity's darkside and of popular sociological and psychological perceptions of evil: the Jungian Shadow (Neumann 137-47 -- which the modern Judeo-Christian tradition's incomprehension insists on labeling evil), the doppelgänger (Foust), the Other, the Outsider, the secret sins, Original Sin, and the unacceptable and inadmissible desires for power and invulnerability. Confrontation with these "dark, uncanny figures of evil" is always a "fateful experience . . . " (Neumann 137). Thus, audiences must believe that monsters live outside both order and restraint and, as such, are the ambiguous embodiments of the simultaneous fear of chaos and the desire for license.

In addition to their total, saturated evil, threats and monsters are irrepressible. There is a reason why vampires are the "Undead." Robert Bloch's Norman Bates will never pass away; even without media and creative attention, he will continue to haunt many showers. In this, deep horror uses the pscyhomachia that characterizes much adolescent art, like fantasy and science fiction. The difference is that, in deep horror, evil wins, and the art is anti-heroic and anti-epic. IMPACT/AUDIENCE APPEAL

Why deep horror and the horrific, in general, are so attractive and pleasurable to mass audiences involves a combination of factors. It certainly has been dismissed as an artificial, infantile, and vicarious excursion, and scholars have postulated audiences of "mindless children" (Thomas 135) that are barbaric and paranoid (Punter 404-5), actively masochistic (Durgnant 882), and blood thirsty (Toch 1). Among the most stunning audience condemnations is John Fraser's British perspective in *Violence in the Arts*:

... the legions of blue-collar American readers of scandal tabloids and crime magazines obviously enjoy being assured of the omnipresence of violence, cynicism, and corruption, since it makes their own decently undramatic lives appear more admirable in contrast (115).

Certainly, immature segments of the audience, usually young people, take extreme delight simply in the self-justification, gore⁴, and the thrills, and their loyalties and desires to view films and characters over and over again can be partially explained through Freud's theory of "compulsive repetition" (238, also see Dickstein 36). For the adolescent mentality (especially the male), deep horror's thrills and chills provide the psychological and sociological satisfaction and vanity of the successful dare. The film The Tingler (1959), for example, warned audiences to flee from the theatre and its wired seats (King, Danse 183). Such reactions are egotistical and narcissistic and offer the liberating satisfaction of staring fear and death down (Twitchell, *Dreadful* 65), thus denying mortality (Barclay 9). Such rites of adolescence and confrontations with the Shadow are among the first challenges of adulthood (Jung 20), ones that adult mavins of deep horror never mature beyond. The affections for gore and dares may, however, be dismissed (among children at least) as those of immature personalities that still hold the myth of invincibility and just do not yet understand the value of self, the significance of its loss, and the dire peril deep horror, were it not artificial, holds.

Also, while considering the immature personality, another obvious appeal is the pubescent, horror-movie date. This ageless conspiracy mandates that young women be frightened and clinging and that young men be brave and appreciative. The roots of such titillation certainly lie deep in the complexities of various adolescent, erotic dreams and visions.

Others, including the young, may seek out deep horror for the emotional and chemical thrills, and levels of adrenalin, endorphen, and corticotropin (causes goosebumps) are high among horror audiences and readers. For example, Ray Bradbury's "Interim," in which a woman's corpse gives birth a year after she was buried, should leave anyone gasping in terror and pumping hormones like a geyser.

Deep horror is also a rite of disinhibition (Stade 1) and, as such, shares characteristics and inversions with ritual holidays like Halloween and Mardi Gras. With little intellectual effort (Brustein 193), opportunities are provided to observe and participate, emotionally and psychologically, with invisibility and anonymity. The horror audience is like a snake.⁵ It remains coiled between strikes, and escape is only a short retreat away. Thus, as the complete voyeur and in a state of "childish hypocrisy" (Toch 1), it is deeply involved in its own inner, anti-social desires while outwardly disguised as entertainment seekers. In this, deep horror's aftermath differs radically from fantasy's generative one: fantasy seeks absolute

truths, horror utter denial. In fantasy, the readers return to the normative world enriched; in deep horror, the return occasions mere relief (Dickstein 35), the affirmation of the secure and the mundane, the cheap cleansing of purgation and penance, the neutralizing of lingering anxieties (Dickstein 35), or even the joy of twisted exultation. Thus, deep horror could be called an affirmation of just being alive and in one psychic piece (Schlobin, "Fantasy" 2264). As such, it offers the simplistic consolations of pain shared and the isolation of loneliness and pain appeased. Further, it may also include the egotistical joy of effortless participation in the archetypal myth of the eternal return (death and resurrection).

For the "normal" personality, the immediate effect of effective deep horror, one would suppose, should be of elemental, uncontrollable dread and oppressive fear, frequently of the unknown. This, of course, requires a high degree of attentiveness, emotional surrender, seeming risk, and major suspension of disbelief. (Deep horror, for example, will not work for an audience that wonders why visitors just don't leave Dracula's castle or why the Mummy can't be outrun.) These dire effects are encouraged through deep horror's extensive use of encoding, tension, foreshadowing, foreboding portents, threats, dramatic irony, and rising action. For example, what would any horror film be like without the usual creepy music?

Given deep horror's punishments and the assumption that portions of the audience do identify with the normal characters and their inexplicable sufferings -penance, purification, and catharsis for transgressions real or imagined (sins in thought, word, and deed) are certainly also important audience appeals. Much can also be understood from So/ren Kierkegaard's definition that dread "is a desire for what one dreads, a sympathetic antipathy" (xii) and C. G. Jung's mysterium coniunctionis. They are both ways to articulate the fusion of apparent opposites. Deep horror serves as an balm for the dark world that many suppress and deny (Neumann 139), a way to ease the "... re-embodiments of secret fears and desires, of monstrous hungers and frightful lusts" (Stade 1) that deep horror shares with its audiences. This dark, irresponsible liberation appeals to those who cannot relinquish the mindless, immoderate, and narcissistic love of their dark selves, who cannot make proper recompense, or who suffer from paranoia. For Christians, at least, this is an attempt to find salvation without grace; scholars might say consolation without effort of significance. On the one hand, to say this vicarious suffering is without pain denies the strong impact of psychological and emotional responses. On the other hand, however, the kind of pain felt in an artificial experience must, by definition, be less (despite what traumas the imagination can accept or create) and is childishly self-indulgent.6

Yet another major way in which deep horror accomplishes its effects is by offering participation in the sacrificial scapegoating of the characters, a process

that takes place for the characters without the usual Judeo-Christian requirement of sin preceding penance. For the maladjusted adolescent, for example, films like *Carrie* (1976) and *The Spell* (1977) serve as vicarious vengeance against adults and peers. Roger Ebert cites two incidents of such behavior among adults. The distinguished, white-haired sadist has already been mentioned. The second is the audience that found the mentally retard rapist in *I Spit on Your Grave* uproariously funny (54). Indeed, in deep horror, the most ghastly suffering, pain, and denial take place without justification or rationale and are enjoyed by audiences without fear of retribution, punishment, or revenge. As Stephen King has observed, "The horror film is an invitation to indulge in deviant, antisocial behavior by proxy -- to commit gratuitous acts of violence, indulge our puerile dreams of power, to give in to our worst craven fears" (*Danse* 43; also see Jackson 55).

The scapegoats are the innocent, the different, and the "holier-than-thou" (Fiedler, Love 435), the presumptuous, the uppity women (Ebert 55), the smart-ass kids and intellectuals, the pompous scientists, the excessively rich, the smugly privileged, and the mutants and the freaks -- all beg mass audiences to humble them vilely. In Tod Browning's film Freaks (1932),⁷ a beautiful but smug and evil woman is turned into a feathered and legless monstrosity by actual freaks employeed as actors. This must satisfy an extraordinarily vicious sense of justice, and Harold Garfinkle's impressive research has identified it as the most blatant of "status degradation" ceremonies (420). Such experiences are disquietingly selfreinforcing. Research has shown that increased viewing of violence against women [in The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, 1974; Maniac, 1963; I Spit on Your Grave, 1980; Vice Squad, 1982; and The Toolbox Murders, 1978] leads to an increasingly insensitive reaction to such violence and to audiences perceiving it "as significantly less violent and . . . significantly less degrading to women" (Linz. Donnerstein, and Penrod 130) and more acceptable (144) and enjoyable (142). However, this is typical: those who scapegoat regularly identify with light while doing or thinking the darkest of deeds (Neumann 139-40). The victims, then, must be perceived as different and helpless before the monsters' fictional and the audiences' assumed powers. Scapegoats must also threaten audiences' insecurities, prejudices, paranoias, inadequacies, and hatreds. Since in the stalk-and-slash narrative, the narrative or visual point of view is from the eyes of the agent of mayhem, audiences share skin with the monster and imaginatively "are doing his hideous and bestial deeds" (Twitchell, Dreadful 47), and the spattered blood is not theirs. Victims, then, cringe away from and beg the audience for mercy, mercy that is not given. Within this fascination, deep horror is an act of very ugly selfjustification and a way in which audiences can relieve doubts and, in the case of the vampire, for example, gain imaginary and non-existent potency and sexuality.

Thus, Fraser's observation of the nature of the American audience, mentioned earlier, may be agonizingly accurate.

For mass audiences, then, deep horror, then, is the equivalent of the demonic pact. It does not offer pain or fear. Its gift is seminal and forbidden power (Kaye 7; Twitchell, *Dreadful* 290, see also Punter 411), always irresponsible in its numerous variations. It is the power over guilt, fear, taboo, restraint, scapegoats, inadequacies, and punishments. For some, for example, the "phallic knife" that Twitchell says is both "titillating and repulsive" (*Dreadful* 47) is just attractive. In fact, the monster is actually heroic in some eyes. Much in the same way Satan appears admirable in the early books of Milton's *Paradise Lost*, the monster is able to transgress God's and nature's laws with impunity. It flaunts established power (power that frustrates this portion of the audience) and creates its own (frequently at the expense of the establishment). This is, of course, one of the reasons the Rambo, Billy Jack, and various other vigilante films are so popular. The concept of the Double, especially in its bipartite saint/beast form (i.e., Jekyll and Hyde), provides further insight here. As the author Anne Rice has observed:

... the werewolf in many instances embodies a potent blending of masochistic and sadistic elements. On one hand, man is degraded as he is forced to submit to the bestial metamorphosis; on the other hand, he emerges as a powerful, sadistic predator who can, without regret, destroy other men.

This duality, combined with the audience's vicarious stance, allows someone to sin without guilt, and the less such an audience's sense of humanity's nobility, the more it will jump quickly into the skin of the beast.

Deep horror's appeals bring into serious question the actual nature of the flexible, social limits of sanity and normality. Obviously, those who are fascinated with deep horror harbor deadly and potentially explosive and debilitating mentalities. Deep horror may, then, be of some social, redeeming value as an outlet for sociopathic and destructive character traits, but it is hardly didactic, as Twitchell suggests (*Dreadful 7*). To justify it as a safety value or a purification is, sadly, to recognize symptoms and ignore causes. Its great and rising popularity in the modern era points to serious emotional problems, frustrations, and anger. Standing in lines at bookstores and movie theatres are guilt-ridden penitents waiting to be victimized and surrogate monsters yearning to be activated. None of this is healthy. At best, it caters to inadequacies or to very mundane lives. At worst, it identifies repressed sadism and masochism.

NOTES

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and information I received then.

²A good illustration of this inarticulateness is demonstrated by various supposed "horror" authors interviewed by Douglas E. Winter ("Horror") in regard to "excessive" violence. Suzy McKee Charnas thinks that, in the right hands, violence and horror can lead to self-discovery and insight (25). Chelsea Quinn Yarbro believes that "Horror . . . is very humane, where splatter films and books are dehumanizing . . . " (26). These odd observations are understandable with the knowledge that Charnas and Yarbro are horror writers only in the sense of marketing labels, and they use the vampire as a sign with vastly different meanings than the traditional. David Morrel is far most relevant when he expresses his own delight in ritual and graphic violence (30).

³There is a very strong case to be made that popular entertainment, such as Alice Cooper's stage show (Brogan), and equally popular fundamentalist religions support the continued incarnation of Satan. For example, a group in the town of East Jordan, Michigan, has demanded that the local high school change the name of its teams from the offensive "Red Devils" because of its "satanic meaning." Earlier, a similar group had demanded that the name be changed from the "Crimson Tide" because it sounded too much like the "Communist Red Menace" ("Team"). Further, residents of Chesterton, Indiana, seemed more concerned in 1985 that the teenagers trespassing in a cemetery were Satan worshipers than with any crime. As a result, one of the members of the police department attended a seminar on forms of occult worship.

⁴Children's fascination with gore is so alien to the adult mentality that it often makes the young seem to be another species. Clarence Peterson reported in the *Chicago Tribune* that children desire such items as Cabbage Pail Kids' trading cards, Slobulus (a bouncing head with an eye hanging out), Slime Pit, Skunkman, and Stinkor. Also, some may remember the in-store advertising campaign that accompanied the video release of *Friday the 13th Part VI: Jason Lives*. "Hold a 'Body Count Contest'" to guess how many people Jason Vorhees kills in all six movies and dress the store staff to look like victims were two of the more striking aspects of the campaign's attempt to draw young viewers. The conclusion may be

that children know such items are fake and use them to verbalize and cope with their elemental fears. If that's not the case, another alternative is that they just like it.

⁵The distance is, of course, the difference between real horror, such as the Holocaust, and artificial horror. This distinction was strikingly identified by a Trenton, New Jersey, State Senator, Richard Codey, who took a job at a state mental institution. After obtaining the job while using the name of a dead, convicted rapist, he heard a coworker "brag of assaulting sleeping female residents" and watched other employees prod patients with a pointer. He concluded that his experiences made Kesey's "*One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* look like a picnic" ("Asylum").

⁶On a more positive note, Twitchell thinks this is part of the complicated rite of passage from onanism to reproductive sexuality (*Dreadful* 65). Does this mean that onanism must be exercised to be purged?

⁷For a further discussion of this extraordinary film and the circumstances surrounding its production and reception, see Leslie Fiedler's (*Freaks* 291-98) and Stephen King's (*Danse* 45-6) discussions.

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FANTASY VERSUS HORROR

Among the many debates that have ranged in professional and amateur fantasy circles, none has been as neither heated nor as sustained as the one over the differences between fantasy and horror. It has been the subject of numerous theories, some substantial, most whimsical. There are those who would like to class all unusual literature within the single category of the "fantastic," creating a very large pile composed of horror, fantasy, science fiction, the occult, weird tales - the list continues forever. Others vehemently strive to draw lines of demarcation. This debate is no surprise. The reader who pursues any one of these kinds of literature tends to, at very least, sample the others. Since many such readers are long-time advocates, the attempt of anyone to fiddle with the old beloved tune by separating its notes becomes a threat to a deeply subjective experience, often one that is embedded in personality and development. While the compulsion to sustain the attitude that "everything I like must be one thing and one thing only" is narrowminded at best, the debate itself is an extremely healthy situation and one that should be nurtured within the continued hunt for the definition to end all definitions. The results of such pursuits should be treasured for their values. While there is always the temptation to point to titles that overlap generic definitions, invariably these few examples are classical, those that defy any codification by the magnificence of their very scope and nature. While these masterworks can be only partially understood through definitions, the definitions should not be dismissed merely because they fail to work for a minority of superior texts. The purpose of analysis is to gain insight and to account for many, many works of fiction with a set of general characteristics.

Before proceeding too much further, however, it should be noted that horror and fantasy do have qualities in common. They both require that readers engage, according to W.R. Irwin in *The Game of the Impossible: A Rhetoric of Fantasy* (1976), in a conspiracy that agrees to suspend the rules of everyday (8-9). Readers must invest strong psychological belief in the literary worlds that are presented. Gary K. Wolfe, in his essay "The Encounter with Fantasy" (in Schlobin ed.), correctly points out that this is more than the "willing suspension of disbelief" that Samuel Coleridge first observed and so many scholars have slavishly followed since (including J.R.R. Tolkien in "On Fairy-Stories"). While it is true that readers need to suspend their normal expectations, they do so by investing themselves in the new environments. They may leave one foot in the normal world so they can return still sane, but it should not be forgotten that many readers of fantasy and horror also have that other foot still in the impossible worlds during their day-to-day activities. In this way, both forms seduce their readers, although with radically different results. In addition, both literatures present experiences that cannot be

had in any other way. In certain ways these fictive happening transcent human limitations and give external form to internal realities. One of the major reasons for this is the frequent, if inescapable, uses of the supernatural, numina, and magic and their partial violations of normal rules of causality and expectation. Neither horror nor fantasy, however, fully violates the rules despite both's amorality and frequent rejections of social moralities and occasional dismissal of ethics. Both use everyday elemental fears and aspirations, both seek archetypes and myths, both adhere to linguistic understandings, and both assume mental processes that are quite normal (if distorted). Without these reality touchstones, the fictive assumptions would become so deviant that the works would become unintelligible. For example, David Lindsay's Voyage to Arcturus (1920) and Michael Bullock's Randolph Cranstone and the Pursuing River (rev. ed., 1977, as Randolph Cranstone and the Glass Thimble) come very close to exceeding even the most sensitive reader's credibility. In most cases, however, each form often establishes rules of conduct and life that are more rigid than the normal, and as intellectual games, even their apparent abnormalities are lawful. Finally, both types tend to produce realms and situations that are larger-that-life, in which the plots involve issues of cosmic importance and the essential survival of individuals, the human race, and the very concept of humanity. Within these basic similarities, fantasy and horror provide rare perspectives for their readers. Ambrose Bierce, as observed by Russell Kirk in his essay "A Cautionary Note on the Ghostly Tale," shows how special the reading of such fantastic literature can be when he defines "realism" in his Devil's Dictionary (enl. ed., 1968): "The art of depicting nature as it is seen by toads. The charm suffusing a landscape pained by a mole, or a story written by a measuring-worm." Yet, none of these characteristics, as attractive as they may be as alternatives to reality for Bierce and others, really distinguish fantasy and horror from other types of fictions. They occur elsewhere in epic (itself frequently a fantasy work) and in science fiction, for examples.

Thus, this attempt to explore the distinctive characteristics of fantasy and horror needs to go further. To do justice to fantasy and horror literatures, it should be able to (1) identify two very large groups of fiction, each with its own identifiable characteristics, and to (2) begin to develop a common vocabulary that lovers of literature can use to communicate without confusion. Communication may seem like an odd goal since readers of fantasy and horror have been gathering for a long time under large umbrellas of common interest. Yet it is precisely the nature of these gatherings and conferences that demand the beginning of an end to the Babel of chaotic terms. Consider, for example, that Anne McCaffrey's *The White Dragon* (1978), an obvious and self-proclaimed science-fiction novel, won the 1979 Gandalf Award for the best book-length work of fantasy at the World Science Fiction Conference in England, defeating such obvious fantasy works as

Roger Zelazny's The Courts of Chaos (1978) and Katherine Kurtz's Saint Camber 1978). At the 1980 World Fantasy Convention in Boston, such different works as Charles L. Grant's The Last Call of Mourning (1979) and Patricia A. McKillip's Harpist in the Wind (1979) shared the same ballet for best novel. In 1981 the situation was much the same, and voters were left to shake their heads over the meager string that tied Chelsea Quinn Yarbro's Ariosto (1980) to Peter Straub's Shadow Land (1980). The five-volume Survey of Modern Fantasy Literature includes an odd mix of authors, giving the impression that such authors as William Beckford, Algernon Blackwood, William Peter Blantty, August Derleth, Stephen King, H.P. Lovecraft, Arthur Machen, Edgar Allan Poe, Peter Straub, and Dennis Wheatley are doing the same kind of writing and thinking (and attracting the same audience) as other writers like Richard Adams, Max Beerbohm, G.K. Chesterton, Charles Finney, Kenneth Graham, Madeline L"Engle, C.S. Lewis, John Cowper Powys, T.H. White, and Roger Zelazny. Clearly, situations that bind such divergent groups and writings together are worthy of the charge of overgeneralization, if not confusion. As partial explanation, it should be noted that a portion of this results from the marketing labels that publishers indiscriminately slap on book covers. What makes this confusion between horror and fantasy especially remarkable is that most serious readers sense that there is a difference between the impacts and the natures of fantasy and horror. This is why Fritz Leiber is an unusually discomforting author to read. Ranging from the full horror of Conjure Wife (1952) to the predominant fantasy of the Fashrd and the Gray Mouser (1957 and continuing), his fictions cannot be anticipated. This is an important point: the experienced reader approaches horror writers like Stoker, Stephen King, Robert Bloch, and H.P. Lovecraft far differently than fantasy writers like J.R.R. Tolkien, C.S. Lewis, Alan Garner, and Peter S. Beagle, and this difference is rewarded with a marked difference in product.

The noted critic an scholar David Ketterer, in a conversation at the 1980 Science Fiction Research Association Conference, made a very telling observation on the basic contrasts that distinguish fantasy, horror, and science fiction from one another. He observed that each confronts a very different type of unknown. Fantasy presents a challenging unknown that can be known and conquered by the individual through intuitive, magic, and personal forces. Horror's unknown, in opposition, promises fear and destruction, not fulfillment, and often its advent is chilling and fear-evoking rather than challenging. Science fiction's may be challenging and achievable, like fantasy's, but it is unraveled through scientific and empirical means, leaving personal prerogative in the lurch.

Thus, the objectives of fantasy and horror fiction appear to be different, and the nature of their settings and evils vary radically. In H.P. Lovecraft's "At the Mountains of Madness" (1936), an arctic waste and fell star-headed creatures await

the intrepid scholars. While Charles L. Grant's town of Oxrun Station, the setting of a number of his short stories and novels, may appear to be a typical New England town, beneath its surface lie any number of evils yearning to be born. In these environments, nature and its forces have returned to a primitive chaos, a state in which all the pacifying efforts of humanity's brief history are rendered insignificant. As Stephen King points out in *Danse Macabre* (1981), mere men and women are deeply and essentially helpless in such places (18-19). They are physically and psychologically crushed. In rare cases, the characters may escape these violations of natural order; in others, they are destroyed, not only in body, but in mind and sensibility. They, their identities, their awareness, their immortality, are thrown into the abyss of nothingness. In horror, the evils are too powerful or the characters too weak, and since one of the joys of terror is the creation of abominations, the evils are usually so monstrous that they can crush even the most admirable of protagonists.

In juxtaposition, the English countryside of Alan Garner; the city environs of Peter S. Beagle; the barbaric worlds of Tolkien, Leiber, and McKillip; and the alternate histories of Philip K. Dick, Keith Roberts, and Randall Garrett are generative settings in which friendship is a productive value and personal action a productive effort. Characters rise triumphantly over forces that initially are awesomely daunting, and the balance of nature, myth, and cosmic order are restored and affirmed. Certainly both elements are present in both literatures, but the critical issue is which one predominates. Dread in fantasy serves to convince readers of the peril involved, and real danger must exist or the tale will be boring. It must, for example, be a real issue if Frodo fails to throw the One Ring into the Crack of Doom in Tolkien's Return of the King (1955) just as the fate of the Boy and the White Bird of Dawning are real concerns in Richard Cowper's *The Road to* Corlay (1979) and its sequel, A Dream of Kinship (1981). In the same manner, there is what initially appears to be redemptive magic in Leiber's Conjure Wife and Our Lady of Darkness (1977), but it is overwhelmed by fear. The stress, both quantitatively and qualitatively, is the important consideration, one that involves the conscious manipulation of reader by the artist. This is why fantasy produces a sense of wonder and union, and horror a sense of fear and alienation. Harvey Cox indicates in The Feast of Fools: A Theological Essay on Festivity and Fantasy (1969) that "Fantasy helps determine what we consider to be fact just as surely as the other way around" (12). If this is true, then, horror teaches its readers to fear what the impossible yields, to avoid the psychological depths from which that it appears to spring, and to seek only titillation in the realms that lie beyond reason.

These dramatically different effects arise from the apriori assumptions that horror and fantasy make about the nature of the universe and the methods by which it can be shaped. Fantasy assumes that nature is essentially a generative force and

that the struggle between good and evil is an equal fight in which each side has the power to maintain its essential character and integrity. It exaults growth, maturation, and change as positive tools that are in harmony with natural order. This makes it a literature of affirmation, one that reinforces the hopes (albeit adolescent ones) that life and living are lawful happenings, and it promises that the alert and striving mind can discover beneficial and powerful secrets. Tolkien's Hobbits in the Lord of the Rings Trilogy, for example, profit from their ordeals and gain profound understandings. Alan Garner's children, in *The Weirdstone of Brisingamen* (1960) and *The Moon of Gomrath* (1963), also become something better as a result of their communion with Arthurian Britain as does Will Stanton in Susan Cooper's Dark Is Rising Series (1965-1977). This is why it embodies visionary sacramentalism, according to C.S. Lewis in *An Experiment in Criticism* (1965). Fantasy is a literature that directly vitalizes all that we believe human.

Horror, on the other hand, doesn't do much at all for definitions of human or does so only by inversion. This is because it assumes that the nightmare, not the visionary, part of consciousness is the one that merits or draws attention. Its assumption is that nature can be and is maimed. Where else could such abominations as the Cthulhu Mythos of Lovecraft and his followers come from? For the horror writer and reader, creation is a dark force, and its twisted spawn are a seminal part of the character of the universe. Faced with these monsters, the only emotions that can function are fear and dread, and the most power any of the human characters can hope for is effective flight. This is why the endings of the masterpieces of horror are examples of dyscatastrophe, the death of joy, and why damnation replaces sacramentalism for the humans involved. If fantasy is the literature of affirmation, then, horror is the art of negation. Nowhere is this more apparent than in the use of the theme of the divine birth, the coming of the moral savior. Fantasy's most famous example is, of course, Christ, one that is mirrored in the birth of King Arthur, both of which reflect that of Sargon I (2400 B.C.). Another, more recent example is Charles Saylor's The Second Son (1979). Horror's examples immediately demand a name change to "demon birth." The successes of the film versions of Ira Levin's Rosemary's Baby (1976) and William Peter Blatty's The Exorcist (1971) led to such similar works as Jeffrey Kovitz's The Sentinel (1976) and James Patterson's Virgin (1980). In all these cases, the demon child is presented as a dire threat to all things human and free, as the negation of all compassion and hope.

Thus, the cosmological orientation of horror and fantasy literature are in deep contrast in their root assumptions. In Freudian terms, it might be said that horror marks the triumph of the id, fantasy the ascendance of the ego and the superego. An even better perspective might come form C.G. Jung, who indicates that fantasy is the ultimate statement of individual will and horror the ultimate

repression. If Jung is correct that fantasy gives the will its content (Psychological Types, 1971, p. 115), then, horror must paralyze and torture the will. In both Jung and Freud, there is an assumption here toward which many scholars have pointed, including Lovecraft himself in Supernatural Horror in Literature. It is that the critical elements in horror literature arise from "outside" humanity while those in fantasy come from within. Fantasy will, then, enchant the readers' humanity, and horror will pierce its core with the ice of "the other." For example, Stephen King is a master at revealing the intrinsic "wrongness" of some human behavior, and in "The Monkey" (1980) the filth that rises from the twisted characters is as important as the bizarre jack-in-the-box. In much the same way, Harlan Ellison creates a human monster with the Master Timekeeper in "Repent, Harlequin!' Said the Ticktockman" (1965). Ellison's abomination even has the power to destroy the most resilient of all organisms, the fool. Yet, at the same time, Lila in Beagle's "Farrell and Lila the Werewolf" (1974) remains an interesting, not a repulsive, metamorph despite her monthly excursions into the alleys of Manhattan, and the talking crow in his A Fine and Private Place (1960) gains affection rather than picking out eyes. Like the Hunchback of Notre Dame, even the most twisted character can gain sympathy and understanding in a fantasy. This is, of course, because readers have a set of wonderful, not fearful, perspectives. This is not to say that fantasy does not have its horrific elements nor that horror omits fantasy ones. Tolkien's Lord of the Rings has its Orcs, and the darkly veiled Sauron is as good a satanic figure as can be found in contemporary, speculative fiction. Without appropriate danger, who would fear for Frodo and Samwise? In the same vein, Fritz Leiber's Tanzy Saylor is a good witch in a horrifying situation in Conjure Wife. The key to this is what happens to the characters and how much horror or fantasy they experience.

Oddly, however, horror is an experience of safety and conservatism. Readers are allowed to risk it all from the pleasurable nook of their protected and rule-governed psychological "home" through contrast with the terrifying and the chaotic. Fantasy, while it also involves vicarious risk, is much more of a profitable adventure. The readers journey as members of purposeful quests toward enrichment and fulfillment. At the end of horror novels, like Stoker's *Lair of the White Worm* (1911), Gerald John O'Hara's *Malsum* (1981), or J.N. Williamson's *Queen of Hades* (1981), they are ecstatic to still be just themselves, to have survived the assault of the "outsiders" and their paralyzing powers, which render the will and the survival instinct inconsequential. Readers are, like many of the characters, overjoyed just to have escaped. This is the simple and mundane glorification of the self as it is: the delight of preservation. Frequently this glory and relief is followed by what C.N. Manlove calls "numinous rage" in *Modern Fantasy: Five Studies* (1975, p. 9; rev. and rpt. In Schlobin, ed.). This rage is

occasioned by the readers' indignant realization that they have been violated by something that is completely alien to their own humanity. It is in this manner that horror produces a state of "cognitive dissonance," a mental condition in which systems of knowing and understanding are thrown into complete disarray. In contrast, fantasy works like George MacDonald's *Phantastes* (1858), William Morris' *The Well at the World's End* (1896), or Diane Duane's *The Door Into Fire* (1979) provide readers with experiences that are immediately attractive in their amplifications of self. As Robert Scholes points out in *Structural Fabulation* (1975), the return to the "normal" world is improved by a new perspective, giving the fantasy experience utopian character. As a result, readers will be left with a set of mental conditions through which they can integrate the reading experience with the everyday and have cognitive harmony rather than dissonance. In horror, of course, it is the old perspective and orientation that is valuable, if only through the relief it provides.

Much of the difference between horror and fantasy comes from their difference origins. It is well known and well documented, by Alphonse Montague Summers in The Gothic Quest: A History of the Gothic Novel (1938) and Lovecraft in Supernatural Horror in Literature among many others, that horror's most immediate parent is the Gothic tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The progenitors of fantasy are not so obvious. This is probably because fantasy's debts to such ancient and numerous forms as the saga, epic, medieval romance, folktale, and fable make the search for its origins a daunting and intimidating task – one that has overwhelmed a number of researchers. Still, it is surprising that no one has explored its immediate roots among the British Romantics. Their reliance on the intuitive, John Keats' "negative capability" (the ability to transport one's self into a totally different consciousness), William Blake's journeys through innocence and experience, and William Wordsworth's "spots of item" (the places where the temporal cross the eternal) – all this and more point to the sustained tradition that produced the first obvious modern fantasy, Sara Coleridge's Phantasmion (1837). (The fact that she was Samuel Taylor Coleridge's only daughter certainly does not hurt the consideration of this connection.) In addition, the works of William Morris reflect numerous Romantic influences. Is it any wonder that two such contrary forms as the Gothic and the Romantic would product two different modern literatures?

There is little doubt that the debate over the identities of fantasy and horror will continue to rage. Hopefully, respect for the integrity of both forms will produce discussion that gives each its due. For too long, each has been neglected and ill-served by the attempts t make them into one harmonious mass. There have been some good signs as of late that this is the case. Roger C. Schlobin's *The Literature of Fantasy: A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography of Modern*

Fantasy Fiction (1979) and Marshall B. Tymn, Kenneth J. Zahorski, and Robert H. Boyer's Fantasy Literature: A Core Collection and Reference Guide (1979) have provided valuable, annotated illustrations of large bodies of literature that fit a functional definition of fantasy. Horror Literature: A Core Collection and Reference Guide (ed. Marshall B. Tymn, 1981) have done much the same for horror. Despite a number of theoretical studies (see below), such collections of examples must be the backbone of any effective debate. Hopefully, the controversy will continue: along that way lies enlightenment!

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PROTOTYPIC HORROR: THE GENRE OF THE BOOK OF JOB

In responding to David Pellauer's 1981 essay "Reading Ricoeur Reading Job," Alan W. Olson articulates the dilemma of the Book of Job's genre that has long troubled biblical scholars:

In the matter of Job's silence we are driven to the brink of the void, if not directly into it, for the meaning of reference is eclipsed and annihilated. We are confronted, it would seem, by a genre of literature that goes beyond the tragic . . . (116).

By not proceeding and identifying the genre "beyond the tragic," Olson reflects an old bafflement with the Book of Job's literary type. In 1959, Norman K. Gottwald observed that it is ". . . a work so unique that it does not fall into any of the literary genres of antiquity or modernity" (*Light* 472), and in 1979, W. Lee Humphreys added it eludes strict classification (202). Indeed, Joseph Campbell's 1949 edict that "categories . . . are totally shattered by the Almighty of the Book of Job, and remained shattered to the last" (*Hero* 148, also cf. Penchansky 23) seems to have remained the governing assumption in any search for the work's literary identity.

However, the critical perspectives of the fantastic may be able to identify the nature of the Book of Job. Like the Greek tragedy to which it is often compared and like the dystopian, it is an example of the larger mode or genre of horror. In fact, comparing the characteristics of the Book of Job to those established for more modern works reveals it as a prototype of horror and horror's inexplicable and uncontrollable agony.

The three, critical elements of horror are 1) its distortion of cosmology (more specifically, in Job's case, theodicy); 2) its dark inversion of signs, symbols, processes, and expectations that causes this aberrant world; and 3) its monster-victim relationship with its archetypal devastation of individual will (for a full discussion of these key elements of horror literature, see Schlobin passim). Most of these elements have been identified by biblical scholars as existing in the Book of Job; so a portion of what will be done here is to assemble their insightful pieces of the puzzle.

In all of horror's refractions, the aberrant world or distorted cosmology is one of its required characteristics. H. P. Lovecraft offers one of the best descriptions of this environment: it is "A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread" within which there is "a malign and particular suspension or defeat" of those "safeguards against the assault of chaos . . ." (15). In a more general literary context, Northrop Frye's final stage of irony, the demonic epiphany, echoes this environment:

The dark tower and prison of endless pain, the city of dreadful night in the desert, or, with a more erudite irony, the *tour abolie*, the goal of the quest that isn't there, [a] blasted world of repulsiveness and idiocy, a world without pity and without hope . . . (*Anatomy* 239).

Beyond either of these descriptions, horror's world must initially begin as a normal one, just as the Book of Job does with Job's favored state. Yahweh, himself, in his early conversation with the Accusing Angel, offers testimony of Job's quality and the proper rewards he has received:

God said [to the Accusing Angel), "Did you notice my servant Job? There is no one on earth [sic] like him: a man of perfect integrity, who fears God and does nothing wrong."

The Accuser said, "Doesn't Job have good reason for being so good? . . . You bless whatever he does . . . " (Mitchell, *Book* 6*).

In addition to the presence of a normal world and even as order crumbles to chaos, there must be the futile hopes of success, triumph, and/or escape. For example, Job demonstrates such optimism by his "sporadic moments of hopefulness and intimations of vindication" (Greenberg 292), consternation, and cries for justice. A number of scholars recently have reinforced this point: Edwin Good observes that Yahweh's speeches "taunt Job's lack of power and invite him to exert power he doesn't have" (369); Bruce Zuckerman suggests that the Poet of Job creates a "vision of revewal and resurrection so that he can ultimately and utterly discredit it" (134). Thus, as with the later Gothic setting, the characters with whom readers identify or empathize have nowhere to go; they are trapped within the incomprehensible. Here the observations of biblical scholars serve them well. Paul Ricoeur (whose *The Symbolism of Evil* was the subject of a 1981 issue of Semeia, edited by John Dominic Crossan) observed that the Book of Job is "... an upsetting document that records the shattering of the moral vision of the world" (314) and has a cosmology within which humanity hardly exists (78). Loretta Dornisch agrees that, in Job 38, order is beyond human knowing (epistemology) (6). André Lacocque adds that there is no real, accurate retribution in the world (36), that God demonstrates "that there is no ethical dimension in the natural realm. only in the societal" (45), and that God's response to Job and Job's subsequent submission are "unexpected and properly incomprehensible" (34). Joseph Campbell reinforces such visions by his statement that God makes no attempt to explain any of the distortions (Hero 147), such as the wager or the lack of justice. As Good suggests further, "The God plays arbitrary, unmotivated games with 'peoples' (vv 23-24) in 'lightless dark'" (255). Job knows that his world and expectations have been inverted. Early in the poem, in reaction to Bildad the Shuhite's criticism of his complaints, Job says:

He [Yahweh] does not care; so I say

he murders both the pure and the wicked.

When the plague brings sudden death,

he laughs at the anguish of the innocent.

He hands the earth [sic] to the wicked

and blindfolds its judges' eyes.

Who does it, if not he? (Mitchell, Book 28).

Later, in his response to Zophar the Namathite, he further laments his suddenly discordant world:

Why do the wicked prosper

and live to a ripe old age?

Their children stand beside them;

their grandchildren sit on their laps.

Their houses are safe from danger,

secure from the wrath of God.

Not one of their bulls is impotent;

not one of their cows miscarries.

Their grandchildren run out to play,

skipping about like lambs,

singing to drum and lyre,

dancing to the sound of the flute.

They end their lives in prosperity

and go to the grave in peace (Mitchell, Book 52).

The second major element of horror is that evil, cosmic inversion is at its heart. Considering the Book of Job's ongoing fascination, it's not surprising it shares this characteristic with other enduring works of literature, like Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Othello*, Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and Dante's *Divine Comedy* among just a few. Job identifies one of the major elements of inversion when he tells Bildad the Shuhite of the reversal of friendship and love:

All my friends have forgotten me;

my neighbors have thrown me away.

My relatives look through me

as though I didn't exist.

My servants refuse to hear me;

they shun me like a leper.

My breath sickens my wife;

my stench disgusts my brothers.

Even young children fear me;

when they see me, they run away.

My dearest friends despise me;

I have lost everyone I love (Mitchell, Book 48-49.

To clarify this further, Ricoeur is off the point of Job's complaints and anguish when he remarks, generally, that "... etitogical myths testify that man's most moving experience, that of being lost as a sinner [my stress], communicates with the need to understand and excites attention by its very character as a scandal" (3). The reason, of course, that this applies only peripherally is one of the many major inversions in the Book of Job: Job isn't a sinner although he is punished and treated as one. A more pertinent observation, than Ricoeur's, is that the great works of literature transfix by the fascination of evil and by their characters' attempts to unravel and uselessly rationalize its machinations prior to any attempts at explanation. Certainly, neither Job's friends nor Yahweh present him any clarification, direction, or explanation.

Horror's and the Book of Job's distortions of their normal worlds are based on violation of all expectations, such as Yahweh's of his covenant with Job (Mitchell, Book 6, 8, 73). Alan W. Olson (in the quotation that opened this paper) captured this perfectly when he said that "the meaning of reference is eclipsed and annihilated" (116) in the Book of Job. Moshe Greenberg, in The Literary Guide to the Bible, adds that "reversal and subversion prevail throughout" (283). Penchansky adds intention and suggests the the Job poet "writes out of a sense of pain, of dislocation, a feeling of wrongness ... " (20), and Edwin Good says that the light of Genesis has been turned into darkness in Job's case (29, 191, 196-7, 204-5). This concept of this corruption of meaning has drawn the attention of scholars of the horrific. Rosemary Jackson, in a discussion of what she calls the "uncanny," says horror "empties the "real" of its "meaning" and removes the significance from signs (68). Jackson is, in part, right: the real is emptied, and modern illustrations, which also strip assumed meanings from what is perceived as "real." are such films as Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956; novel by Jack Finney as The Body Snatchers) and The Stepford Wives (1975 from Ira Levin's novel). James B. Twitchell draws conclusions similar to Jackson's, postulating that horror "... is the art of generating breakdown, where signifier and signified can no longer be kept separate . . . " (Dreadful 16). From the biblical side, Loretta Dornisch adds that "Job 38 is a magnificent example of religious language which climatically presents the extraordinary in the ordinary and thereby reorients by disorientation" (14). Richard Jacobson, in "Satanic Semiotics, Jobian Jurisprudence," detects a similar pattern of destruction or inversion of meaning by pointing out that the Book of Job's "relentless contradiction . . . signifies relentless alienation, a primary uncertainty, an essential paradox" (63). Then, when it tries to "achieve conviction" (65), I would add that nothing results; all of Job's efforts are fruitless. Justice is never delivered; piety yields torment; social approval becomes public degradation; "... images of death constantly put the cap on the images of life" (Good 272; also cf. Zuckerman 118-35).

Most importantly (and what Jackson, Twitchell, Dornisch, and Jacobson do not mention), horror, generally, and the Book of Job, specifically, substitute new meanings for signs. Rather than stripping significance from signs, horror fills them with inverted and deadly meanings, repugnant to the victims and attractive to the monsters (or to those who relish horror's punishment of its victims [Ebert passim, Schlobin 39-45]). Job senses this early in the poem:

Why is there light for the wretched,
life for the bitter-hearted,
who long for death, who seek it
as if it were buried treasure,
who smile when they reach the graveyard
and laugh as their pit is dug.
For God has hidden my way
and put hedges across my path.
I sit and gnaw on my grief;
my groans pour out like water.
My worst fears have happened;
my nightmares have come to life.
Silence and peace have abandoned me,

and anguish camps in my heart (Mitchell, Book 14).

Since meaning has fallen, Job has no chance to understand his punishment. Thus, horror's and the Book of Job's relations between sign and meaning will not yield to the coercion of any human's reason, experience, wisdom, intelligence, and most of all, individual will. As Stephen King has described, terror "arises from a pervasive sense of disestablishment, that things are in the *unmaking* [my stress]" (22). I would further expand this to say that the "unmaking" is followed by an unnatural and unholy *making* that no one, reader or character, can understand or coerce.

Specifically, what are the natures of other distortions in the Book of Job? The most obvious is the inversion of Job's relationship with Yahweh, which changes from covenant to betrayal, the "cosmic breach of faith" (Sewall 11) sometimes typical of the tragic. Unbeknownst to Job until halfway through the poem ("... God has tricked me,/ and lured me into a trap." [Mitchell, *Book* 48]), his relationship with the divine is subjugated to a wager of which he is the subject. Affirming such betrayal, Andrµ Lacocque points out that the Book of Job is about the impotence of religion and philosophy (42), and within the frame of inversion, religion becomes nihilism and existentialism (for want of a less modern term) and philosophy, idiocy.

Once this context is understood, inversions fall from the Book of Job like the proverbial manna. Other scholars have indicated that there is something wrong with the law of retribution (Crenshaw 101, Dornisch 5), and Paul Ricoeur has gone

so far as to say the Book of Job renounces it (322). Clearly, Job's suffering is undeserved (Crenshaw 101, Dornisch 5); it is pointless torture. The unjustified pain -- the death of his sons and daughters, the horrible skin disorder, the poisoned breath (Mitchell, Book 7, 8, 21, 23, 49) -- occurs because sin, the proper cause of retribution, is absent from horror or the Book of Job since sin, to exist at all, presumes a standard of absolute morality to exist. In a cosmos completely ruled by chance and wager, divine torment is the game and good is irrelevant; evil masquerading as good stands alone, unchallenged and supreme. There is no moral order in the Book of Job. It follows, then, that justice is not to be found in the natural order of things (Curtis 498 citing M. Tsevat's "The Meaning of the Book of Job." HUCA 37 [1966]: 73-106) since it too assumes good. Job's legal pleadings must become no more than babble, and Bruce Zuckerman speculates that the poet of Job saw his protagonist as the "ultimate fool" (47). Job summons only Yahweh's unresponsive presence, and while Northrop Frye may see only "something irrational in divine providence" (Words 108), the text indicates that Yahweh's dominance is fully irrational (see the discussion of Yahweh as monster and the element of justice below -- especially Lacocque's and Ricoeur's observations -- for further elaboration).

Of course, another, extensive illustration of distortion and inversion is Job's friends' reactions. Biblical scholar William Morrow, citing M. Tsevat's "The Meaning of the Book of Job" (HUCA 37 [1966]: 91-92), accurately indicates that the wisdom theology spouted by Job's friends can be dismissed as a falsification of reality (221); Lacocque concurs that their arguments "amount to a pious lie" (35; also see Greenberg 302-303 below); and Good identifies Bildad's reasoning as circular (218). Charles Muenchow's "Dust and Dirt in Job 42:6" provides wise insight into why Job's friends' support and nurturing turn into demeaning criticism. Muenchow chronicles the competitive place honor has as a social phenomenon directly related to power and authority (600). Thus, the friends see an opportunity to humiliate, diminish, and demean Job (608-609). Shame (601) and the reduction of his power and social position result, both serving two functions here. One, Job's friends are constant reminders of the contrast between the assumed world order, which is no longer functional, and Yahweh's new stance. Two, they anticipate contemporary, gloating, and safe audiences who also vicariously enjoy seeing virtuous victims punished by monsters; friendly comfort, for Job, is nonexistent and ineffectual (Good 232, Zuckerman 101). Often, in the modern horror film, audiences view this punishment through the monster's eyes (Ebert passim) and see the victim begging them for the mercy that is never given. Frequently, these victims, like Job, are the admirable, the successful, the justifiably proud, and the advantaged. Sadly, there is significant evidence that horror's audiences, and Job's friends, gloat over the agonies of the

privileged (for a survey of the scholarly comments and an analysis of audiences' enjoying victims' suffering, see Schlobin 39-45). One of the most stinging analyses of modern, American audiences' responses to suffering is offered by John Fraser in *Violence in the Arts*:

... the legions of blue-collar American readers of scandal tabloids and crime magazines obviously enjoy being assured of the omnipresence of violence, cynicism, and corruption, since it makes their own decently undramatic lives appear more admirable in contrast (115).

While it may be intellectually and historically invalid to compare Job's friends to Fraser's "blue-collar Americans," it is none-the-less not too far a leap to see smugness and relish in the friends' attacks on Job as they ironically believe they know the truth and use it to promote themselves socially at Job's expense without any efforts of their own. Further, it is tempting to think of the Book of Job's Yahweh as the anthropomorphic creation of the "friends" or, at least, as someone like them who existed in the author's mind.

Ultimately, what the inversions of signs and processes in the Book of Job show is how the horrible wager destroys moral processes and perceptions. Thus, the inversion is the history of how Job's piety, which once brought him regard and favor, now yields extreme punishment (for a discussion of how Eliphaz's "pernicious arguments undermine piety," see Greenberg 291). At the end, and as André Lacocque has observed, "In anguish, we [and Job] discover the total collapse of meaning" (46). Nor is there any real promise that the future will be any better since hope has been transformed into dread. Early in the poem, Job's response to Eliphaz the Temanite indicates that "all hope has been driven away" and later adds "like a cloud my hope is gone" (Mitchell, *Book* 21, 71). If there were any doubt, Yahweh affirms this at the end of the poem from the whirlwind: "... hope is a lie" (Mitchell, *Book* 86). This is made darker by the complete absence of any mention of an afterlife anywhere in the poem and strong indications that physical death is final (Mitchell, *Book* 36-37). Thus, there is no benevolent promise that Job's suffering in this life will be rewarded in another.

Yahweh, along with horror's monsters, is in accord with Lacocque's "collapse of meaning" and some biblical scholars' descriptions. In general, horror's creatures are blatantly oblivious to any human senses of order, ethics, or morality. They are so evil that good is either unknown or has no impact on them (just as Yahweh is more interested in the wager than in Job). Their natures are incomprehensible to the epistemologies of their victims (cf. Mitchell, *Into* 100), and monsters are completely capable of disintegrating their victims' bodies and souls. Job reveals this knowledge about his own monster when he responds to Eliphaz the Temanite:

But he wills, and who can stop him?

What he wishes to do, he does. He will go ahead with his plans, devising my endless torment.

This is why terror grips me;

when I think of it, I am appalled.

He has wrung the strength from my mind

and pumped my heart full of sorrow (Mitchell, Book 59-60).

Thus, in the standard manner of horror, Yahweh renders Job's will and spirit im-

potent.

In most modern horror, monsters can come in any form, both natural and supernatural, and frequently they mirror the dark sides of their creators. However, those who have examined Yahweh have taken an extreme view and have paralleled Leslie Fiedler's identification of horror's monster as alien: "... the abominable, to be truly effective, must be literally unspeakable" (121). Lacocque says that the nature of creation in the Book of Job, unlike the standard in much of the Old Testament, is the work of an impersonal deity who lacks ethical standards; he points to the deity of Israel's scriptures, for whom "justice" is not a trait (38), as the governing power in the Book of Job. In the same vein, Frye indicates that "One can understand, up to a point, the Gnostic inference that the God of the Old Testament was an evil being; one remembers that most mythologies have a trickster god . . . " (Words 107). Ricoeur is less historical but far more emphatic. For him, Yahweh is a destructive enemy (54), and "... the violated [inverted] pact makes God the Wholly Other and man nothing in the presence of the Lord" (50, 81; also cf. Mitchell, Book viii; Good 241; Zuckerman 46). As extreme as Ricoeur is, his view may be most accurate. From the inception of the wager through Yahweh's challenging words (Curtis 497), Job is helpless before the irrational forces and punishments forced upon him. Yahweh is a divine solipsist who has no expectation of losing the wager or suffering any consequences.

And it is Job's helplessness that reflects the usual "relationship" between monster and victim in horror. As scapegoat and victim, Job must open to the monster's invasion, from his most basic level of intimacy to his obvious social status. The monster, Yahweh here, is the omnipotent master, and he shatters Job's "... protective hedge bit by bit" (Crenshaw 102) with his "brute power" (Good 375). Job is stripped of even the most basic defenses and assurances he expects from either civilization or the divine.

As Yahweh's victim (Lacocque 39; Mitchell, *Book* vii), Job is typical of most in horror and reflects its simplest element: he offers admirable familiarity to his audience. He is undeniably virtuous (Greenberg 286) and pious, being neither dupe nor dolt. The Book of Job opens with his praise (Mitchell, *Book* 5). He

knows he is innocent (Lacocque 35; Campbell, *Hero* 147; Mitchell, *Book* viii) despite his punishments and his friends' unrelenting insistences to the contrary. He is brave and resolute, showing not the slightest indication that he "recants or in remorse grovels before the divine" (Curtis 505).

His "undeserved suffering" and justified responses (Crenshaw 101, Dornisch 5) are also quite common among the horror that has followed the Book of Job. This is where Joseph Campbell appears to identify Job incorrectly. Although Campbell glorifies him and parallels him to Prometheus, Christ, Atlas, and Loki (Creative 415), these figures had at least some justification for their pains and, most significantly, had control over their choices and actions, which simply Job does not. All suffer for far more than a wager as do the protagonists of the Greek tragedy that has been equated with the Book of Job. No, Job is not a member of this group. He has not transgressed against the gods. He has none of the characteristics of the tragic hero: he lacks freedom (Sewall 45), control, and defects (fatal flaw, hamartia, or hubris. Rather, he is pointlessly "terrorized" (Mitchell, Book x), humiliated, debased, and forced to inescapably endure wretched suffering (Morrow 221; Mitchell, *Book* viii; Penchansky 79). He tries to depend on his knowledge, his wisdom, his will, but all are devastated by divine oppression. As in most horror, the devastation is made more agonizing because Job knows it is happening but is incapable of understanding or preventing anything: he suffers but is unaware of the necessity or reasons for a "boundarysituation' not of his own making" (Sewall 46).

A critical key to the magnitude of Job's debasement is the widely cited line involving "dust" or "dust and ashes." It has been translated in a variety of ways and has been the subject of much debate among biblical scholars. Stephen Mitchell provides "comforted that I am dust" (Book 88). Morrow cites a multitude of translations that include "consoled for dust and ashes," "I reject dust and ashes," "I consider myself dust and ashes," "I am become dust and ashes," "I reject and forswear dust and ashes" (212-213, 221), and a possible synthesis "I retract (or I submit) and I repent on (or on account of) dust and ashes" (211). Muenchow suggests further that Job sinks to or is sitting on dust and ashes (609). The obvious consistency here, about which there appears to be little debate, is the recurrence of "dust and ashes." This may be the answer of Job's fate and the key to what has happened to him. The breath of God has been sucked from him. As a result of this, and according to Moshe Greenberg, Job has assumed "qualities of insubstantiality (4:19), lifeless malleability (10:9), worthlessness (13:12) . . . " (302-3). Job has been reduced to a pre-creation state, de-evolved and returned to nothing more than the clay of the Earth (Good 228, 307, 340; also cf. Mitchell, Book xiii), less than human. Job foreshadows this in one of his answers to Bildad the Shuhite, " . . . you [Yahweh] formed me from clay/ and will soon turn me

back to dust" (Mitchell, *Book* 30) and identifies himself with "dust" on, at least, four other occasions (Mitchell, *Book* 24, 30, 45, 72). Most cruelly, he does not become insentient "dust"; his consciousness and awareness of his wretched state remain when the divine is withdrawn from him.

There have been those who have spoken of a final reward for Job. Joseph Campbell thinks he gains terrible wisdom as the result of his suffering (Creative 415). Paul Ricoeur (qtd. by Dornisch 5) calls Job's plight tragic and speaks of restoration. Both of these scholars assume Job's experience has meaning, but it does not. By definition, his knowledge is not wisdom; it lacks the necessary component of understanding to be wisdom. All that the defenseless Job knows is omnipotent fact and whimsy, both imposed without explanation and without any attempt to provide accompanying comprehension. Thus, while his being lacks the creative breath of God, Job's environment, his cosmos, can be perceived as an anti-Eden. In Genesis, the blissful Adam and Eve, with their pre-lapsarian innocence, had facts without understanding. The tortured Job, trapped within the irony of his divinely-created Hell-on-Earth (the inversion of Eden), also has fact (his suffering) and also lacks understanding. However, his world, unlike Adam and Eve's sanctuary, is oppressive and deadly. All three characters have factual knowledge; none have comprehension (with the possible exception of Adam's naming of the creatures); one, Job, suffers amid a divine inversion that maims the nature of all knowledge and makes wisdom irrelevant, if not a mockery, for humanity. He points directly to this when he says to Zophar the Namathite:

Doesn't the mind understand

as simply as the tongue tastes?

Do all men grow in knowledge?

Are they wise because they are old?

Only God is wise;

knowledge is his alone (Mitchell, Book 33)

Moreover, when Job's suffering ceases, he is only provided with revelation (Sewall 46) and alleviation, not reward and understanding, and there is little indication in the text that all is returned to him. His dead, for example, are not revived (Good 189, 388-9). What remains to him is the irrevocable truth that all can be taken from him again at any time regardless of his piety, faith, or social standing -- what Stephen Mitchell calls "a ferocious hymn of de-creation" in his analysis of the end of the poem (*Book* xiii). Such ultimate depravation of security, love, and trust is a common characteristic of horror at its most revulsive. There are no happy endings. The monsters can always come again (witness the current multitude of film sequels). Characters may survive, as Job does, but they do so as savaged beings who have paid vast emotional and psychological prices (like Northrop Frye's *desdichado*, figures of misery or madness [*Anatomy* 238-39]). At its very best, and

as Dornisch and Ricoeur have suggested, the Book of Job *might* have taught him and others "how to suffer suffering" (Dornisch 7 citing and quoting Ricoeur's "Toward a Hermeneutic of the Idea of Revelation." *Harvard Theological Review* 70 [1977]: 12).

If this jigsaw puzzle of observations, "horrific scholarship," and biblical scholarship does work, how is it that it has remained incomplete for so long? Have the assumptions that the Book of Job is in some way didactic or wise distorted the ability to recognize its true nature? It would appear that the common assumption that the Book of Job is among the examples of "Wisdom literature" has forced people well away from the text itself. An examination of Norman K. Gottwald's cogent and representative definition of such literature might confirm this:

"If we . . . think of wisdom as a nonrevelatory mode of thought that focuses on individual consciousness of truth and right conduct, displaying a humanistic orientation and a didactic drive to pass on its understanding to others, it is easy to see "wisdom" almost everywhere in the Hebrew Bible where there is no direct speech of God (*Hebrew* 567).

However, it is not "easy to see" the Book of Job within this description. What Job learns of truth is obviously revelatory: it is the "direct speech of God" and certainly does not require any rational "mode of thought" from him or his friends (cf. Mitchell, *Book* 34; Good 234-5). The Yahweh of the whirlwind might just as well be stating the law of gravity without explanation for all the understanding that is offered or found. No, Yahweh's "truth" is only bare fact; it does not contain or require wisdom or understanding. Moreover, if the "wisdom" of the Book of Job were not even for Job, but for readers, what might be the didactic messages? "Do not be too pious, for you will draw the Accuser to you"? "At all costs remain unnoticed; then, you can even be evil"? "Be the second-most virtuous person in the world and you will not suffer"? "Knowledge and wisdom are for gods, not humans"? If anything, the moral is that there is no certainty from the divine. Everything can be taken away and maimed for nothing more than a wager.

A second possibility for what seems to be the missed discovery of the poem's obvious horror revolves around the issue of text. Anyone who has ever done any research on the Book of Job knows that the poem is encrusted with exegesis and commentary. These are fascinating studies in themselves but too often hide the poem from scholars rather than reveal it. I would suggest that the centuries of commentary are the source of the view of the Book of Job as "wisdom through suffering," not the text itself. Thus, it has been taught, and so it has been learned, and so it has been taught in a recurring cycle within which the Book of Job itself may have been lost or obscured.

Yet a third possibility may be that the poem's awesome range and power take it so far beyond the limits of traditional academic disciplines that it requires an approach as wide-ranging and interdisciplinary as the fantastic to begin to capture it. And it could very well be unreasonable to expect anyone in a single discipline to engage the Book of Job. Also, David Penchansky may be partially correct that, for many, the poem is filled with "... disharmonic elements that resist aggressive interpretation" (19). Further, it may be that biblical scholars may either intelligently refuse to subject themselves to the horror genre, or, perhaps, they consider it sub-literary?

With or without these three possibilities, the Book of Job has drawn unceasing attention. It would seem from all the comments by biblical scholars and others that its astonishing, archetypal misery may, in itself, be its appeal, that the need and attempts to rationalize it with the assumption of a just universe may, itself, be the compulsion that has enthralled so many minds. This agonizing and baffling fascination with the nature of the Book of Job and its evil (as well as its horrific successors and their unavoidable, evil natures) among thoughtful scholars and readers and, perhaps, the author of the Book of Job may be explained by Leslie Fiedler when he says, in *Love and Death in the American Novel*, that "evil is real and . . . the thinking man breaks his heart trying to solve its [evil's] compatibility with the existence of a good God or his own glimmering perceptions of Goodness" (418).

Within this heartbreak and throughout the millennium, the Book of Job's heinous poison has festered beneath poultices of exegesis. Often, the venom is unrecognizable beneath adhesive rationality and intellectual evasion. If the poem is, indeed, as horrific as portrayed here, then, any rational approach that assumes order and benevolence is certain to slap layers of insulation and disguise over it. Job's story may be the most soul-chilling work of all time; no wonder so many have placed intellectual balms on its piercing darkness. Moreover, its deadly fangs have been all the greater since it is set within accompanying literature that lulls unsuspecting readers into false expectations of comfort and healing. Minds have justifiably quailed before the Book of Job and fearfully hidden it beneath the machinations of interpretation. The human has recoiled from the non-human, from the void, seeking escape from the truly hideous Other that violates all sanctuaries and sensibilities. Few other works are so unexpectedly nihilistic; few others have offered such potent and persistent infection.

NOTE

*Stephen Mitchell's revised 1987 translation of the Book of Job, used exclusively here, does not use chapter and verse. Thus, references to the text are page numbers.

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FANTASY through 1998

INTRODUCTION

Since this essay was first written over a decade ago, the state of fantasy has changed dramatically in four ways. In general, some of this is due to the unqualified and continuing success of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts with its annual conference, proceedings, and Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts. Even more significantly, the internet is beginning to change the access to fantasy literature and its resources just as it has changed modern life.

First, primary and secondary bibliographies have been revolutionized now that Locus Publications maintains a massive on-line database, The Locus Index to

Science Fiction (1984-1977), with annual updates* (cf. Brown).

Second, John Clute, Peter Nichols, and David Langford maintain a "Corrigenda" to The Encyclopedia of Fantasy* that includes additions and corrections. Hopefully, this will begin a trend of up-to-date reference works and eliminate the frequently long wait for revised editions.

Third, the University of Michigan's fantasy and science-fiction "Electronic Library,"* under the direction of the late Eric S. Rabkin, addresses, in part, the difficulty of out-of-print texts that has long plagued fantasy. The selection is limited by copyrights and by the exclusion of individual short stories, but its gathering of primary texts from throughout the internet makes it an invaluable resource. The ephemeral availability of classroom resources may be slightly alleviated by the entry of such publishers as Oxford University Press and Tom Shippey's admirable *The Oxford Book of Fantasy Stories* now, sadly, out of print), but this does not replace the passing (and lost alternatives) of such notable anthologies as Kenneth H. Boyer and Robert J. Zahorski's Fantastic Imagination and Gary Wilkins' A Treasury of Fantasy, which included the full texts of George MacDonald's Phantastes and William Morris' The Wood Beyond the World. Occasionally, Robert H. Silverberg and Martin H. Greenberg's The Fantasy Hall of Fame is offered through the Science Fiction Book Club.* Is it any wonder that when teachers of fantasy gather to discuss the canon, the conversation often turns, not to what is appropriate, but to what is available?

Fourth, both the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts* and nascent Science Fiction, Utopian and Fantastic Literature discussion group* of the Modern Language Association maintain internet discussion groups ("list serves") through which scholars and teachers can exchange information and submit queries.

Amid all the innovations in modern technology, fantasy literature still continues to struggle for its rightful and seminal place in the general literary and scholarly community. This persists despite such early observations as E. M. Forster's identification of it as

... something that cuts across them [aspects of the novel] like a bar of light, that is intimately connected with them at one place and patiently illumines all the problems, and at another place shoots over or through them as if they did not exist (74).

Forster might have just as easily agreed with George MacDonald who identified fantasy as the "richest source of human creativity" (2), for it dwells at the heart of all human endeavor, be it highly creative or lowly everyday. It may not be real in any measurable sense, but it is among the most potent of thought processes.

In a few ways, it is clear why it has always been powerful and popular but has not drawn larger intellectual and scholarly acceptance (see Schlobin, "Scholarship"). The development of Western European culture has frequently been inhospitable to the "make believe" that so often is associated with fantasy. Certainly, religion, one of the richest indications of the human faculty to create what is not empirically real, has long been antithetical to any other fanciful constructs. Moreover, in the modern period, the pursuit of the pragmatic and the scientific has not encouraged "escapist excursions" into worlds that cannot be.

For some time, fantasy had some small, token attention, but there are strong indications this is changing. Occasionally, the Science Fiction Research Association (established in 1970)* would allow the parent fantasy to visit with its younger child. The Modern Language Association (MLA) and its regional associations, the Popular Culture Association, the American Studies Association, and the National Council of Teachers of English do regularly include sessions. Beginning in 1997, through the efforts of Tom Moylan and Kenneth Roemer. among others, an attempt has been made to invigorate the MLA through the Science Fiction, Utopian and Fantastic Literature discussion group.* It was not until 1980 that fantasy had its own gathering: the International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts. This conference was further enhanced in 1983 and 1984 with the formation of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts, which assumed control of the conference. Finally, fantasy had its own home, and its varied forms and approaches have dramatically flourished in this interdisciplinary and intercultural environment (see Works Cited: Proceedings). Each year the conference is bigger and its presentations more wide ranging and imposing.*

In addition, a number of non-academic groups and conferences focus on fantasy. The World Fantasy Conference has gathered together fantasy fans from throughout the world and, despite its continued inability to distinguish between fantasy and horror, has been honoring writers and holding meetings since 1975. The British Fantasy Society* has been doing much the same thing on a smaller scale since 1972, and *Locus*, the "newspaper of science fiction," began polling the year's best fantasy novel in 1977. Even the World Science Fiction Conference

began recognizing "Grand Masters of Fantasy" with the Gandalf Award in 1974 and added a second Gandalf for best fantasy novel in 1978 (Mallet).

The future of fantasy's popular tradition and the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts are fulfilling their promises. Beginning in 1988, The Journal of the Fantastic in the Arts (JFA)* became the first scholarly journal to focus exclusively on the field. It regularly publishes wide-ranging essays that cross international boundaries and various media. Paradoxa* occasionally focuses on the fantastic, but it is far more eclectic than JFA and includes romance, westerns, science fiction and numerous other forms under the rubric of "paraliterature." Mythlore,* long exclusively devoted to the British Inklings, has broadened its scope somewhat and occasionally includes essays on American authors. The CLF Newsletter* is, perhaps, eccentric but deserves watching. At one time, the Fantasy Review surveyed much of the activity in the field, but it unfortunately ceased publication in August of 1987. Robert A. Collins and Robert Latham continued the valuable work of Fantasy Review in book form via the Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Review Annuals for four years. In addition, there have been special fantasy issues of more generally oriented scholarly journals (see Works Cited: Journals below). At this juncture, all looks generative, and no one can guess just how much more extensive it all may become.

HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Fantasy does not yield well to historical or national perspective. It is so elemental, so timeless, and so pervasive that its enormity overpowers thought. Even the smaller realm of American fantasy is a difficult task. Brian Attebery examines the years from Washington Irving (1819) to Ursula K. Le Guin (1972) in his insightful survey The Fantasy Tradition in American Literature. Ann Swinfen's In Defence [sic] of Fantasy adds coverage of British and American Fantasy since 1945. However, these two efforts hardly make a dent. In fact to date, there are only three book-length studies of the British tradition: Stephen Prickett's Victorian Fantasy, Tobin Siebers' The Romantic Fantastic, and Karen Patricia Smith's *The Fabulous Realm*. Most scholars avoid the historical approach and opt for the theoretical, aesthetic, or thematic. This may be because fantasy is varied, immune to time and place, and multicultural. In just the American tradition, alone, for example, William Burroughs' Naked Lunch (1959) has been "pornographic" and banned. Fantasy made its contribution to World War II in Theodore Pratt's Mr. Limpet (1942), and came back from war in Gore Vidal's Kalki (1978). Don Marquis' Archy and Mehitabel (1927) delightfully wandered into the American office and the animal kingdom, and the Second Coming arrived on a construction site in Charles Sailor's The Second Son (1979). Fantasy combined with utopia in Austin Tappan Wright's Islandia (1942) and presented confounding mysteries in John Dickson Carr's The Burning Court (1937). Fritz

Leiber's collegiate *Conjure Wife* (1952), and Dean R. Koontz's spoof *The Haunted Earth* (1973). Gordon R. Dickson combined the epic and romance traditions (sword and sorcery) with the burlesque in *The Dragon and the George* (1976) and its numerous sequels. Many fantasies draw upon folk tales and mythologies from all nationalities; for example, Patricia Wrightson travels as far as Australia for the Aborigine mythology of *The Ice Is Coming* (1977), *The Dark Bright Water* (1978), and *Journey Behind the Wind* (1981), and Charles G. Finney combined numerous traditions and Arizona in *The Circus of Dr. Lao* (1935). Lest anyone think fantasy non-topical, the sixties' free lifestyles found expression in Peter S. Beagle's urban "Lila the Werewolf" (1971) and Richard Brautigan's *Trout Fishing in America* (1967), and the absurd was greeted in Philip Roth's *The Breast* (1972; with due respect to Kafka and Woody Allen). Randall Garrett has deconstructed fantasy in his Lord Darcy mysteries. In short, American writers have had home and the world upon which to draw -- and they have.

The early stirrings of American fantasy literature have yet to be explored at length. Thomas Hooker's The Soul's Preparation (1632), Anne Bradstreet's The Tenth Muse (1650), Increase Mather's Remarkable Providences (1684), Cotton Mather's Wonders of the Invisible World (1693), Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanac (1732), and Thomas Paine's Common Sense (1776) have remained safe from the "fantastic perspective" for the time being. However, scrutiny will one day reveal both the bright and dark fantasies of the Puritans, the Revolutionaries, and the Founding Fathers. They are there! Certainly, the early settlers brought their own folk traditions, fairy tales, literary traditions, and magics with them from the "old world." Yet as much as Thanksgiving, Manifest Destiny and the American West, and baseball distinguish the American character, its fantasy is largely indistinguishable from the rest of the world's in most senses, except for locale and age. This is undoubtedly due to the United States' polyglot nature and the fact that even its repressed minorities maintained the fantasy privilege (see Bowen, Garber). One example of this is the essentially similar treatment of the "most beautiful girl in the world" theme that is common to the widely separated (in time and place) excursions of America's The Princess Bride (1973), by William Goldman, and the Britain's Zuleika Dobson (1911), by Max Beerbohm.

However, there is much agreement that modern fantasy arises in America much as it did in England. It comes primarily from the Romantic tradition (just as horror arises from the Gothic and science fiction from the empirical). However, while the first "modern" fantasy in Britain, Sara Coleridge's *Phastasmion* (which was billed as fairy tale), did not appear until 1837, the roots of the American tradition began earlier with the American Romanticists: Washington Irving's *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819-20) and *Tales of a Traveller* (1824;

the latter with its obvious debt to the Brothers Grimm), Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales* (1837), and Edgar Allan Poe's *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838) and *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* (1840). They were quickly followed by such noteworthy works as Herman Melville's *The Confidence-Man* (1857) and Oliver Wendell Holmes' *Elsie Venner* (1861). Mark I. West's *Before Oz: Juvenile Fantasy Stories from Nineteenth-Century America*, despite its subtitle, is one of the most convincing illustrations of the strength of the American tradition. As these varied works illustrate, American fantasy had already manifested itself in a multiplicity of ways, and its continuing history includes both well-known authors and lesser-known cult ones.

Yet to say that fantasy was widespread and enormously popular in the American literary tradition prior to the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries would be a mistake. However, as the century turned, both recognized literature and its disreputable pulp relations forever branded the American character. While Brian Attebery sees Mark Twain's *A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court* (1889) as a demonstration of "the strong hostility between [pragmatic] American thought and pure fantasy" (79), it and the posthumously published *The Mysterious Stranger* (1916) actually demonstrate the strong antagonism between authority and virtue that is typical of much fantasy. More importantly, they mark the opening of flood gates. L. Frank Baum's Oz books (1900-1920) and his many imitators, Edgar Rice Burroughs' Mars/Barsoom series (1917-1964), and James Branch Cabell's 20-volume Biography of Manuel (1919-23) demonstrate an on-going American fascination that continues to this day.

Curiously, the twentieth century continues a sharp division within fantasy. At one time, fantasy was considered fairy tales and children's fare and was set against "real, adult" literature (and still is in some circles). Beginning in the early 1920's, another chasm appears between "serious" and "pulp" literatures. On one hand are respectable, accepted works: Ben Hecht's *Fantazius Mallare* (1922) and *The Kingdom of Evil* (1924); Thorne Smith's humorous and satiric Topper books (1926, 1932); John Erskine's *Adam and Eve* (1927); Thorton Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth* (1942); James Thurber's *The White Deer* (1945), *The 13 Clocks* (1950), and *The Wonderful O* (1957); John Collier's *Fancies and Goodnights* (1951); John Updike's *The Centaur* (1963); Thomas Tryon's *The Other* (1971); John Barth's *Giles Goat-Boy* (1966) and *Chimera* (1972); Robert Coover's *The Universal Baseball Association, Inc.* (1968); Donald Barthelme's *The Dead Father* (1975) and *The King* (1990); John Crowley's *Little, Big* (1981); and Ken Kalfus' short-story collection *Thirst* (1998), among those mentioned earlier.

On the other hand, buried in those yellowed magazines and paperbacks were works that were making sword-&-sorcery and fantasy household words in places far away from the intellectuals and college faculties. These included Abraham

Merritt's *The Ship of Ishtar* (1927), L. Sprague de Camp and Fletcher Pratt's Incomplete Enchanter series (1941-60), Robert E. Howard's *Conan the Conqueror* (1950), and Poul Anderson's *The Broken Sword* (1954), H. P. Lovecraft's *The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath* (1955), Fritz Leiber's *Two Sought Adventure* (1957), Andre Norton's Witch World series (1963-), Ray Bradbury's *Something Wicked This Way Comes* (1962), and Isaac Asimov's Azazel short stories (1982-88). In addition, DAW Books enjoyed success with an annual series called *The Year's Best Fantasy Stories*. *The Year's Best Fantasy*, edited by Ellen Datlow and Terri Windling, continues this tradition under the St. Martin's Press imprint (1988-).

However, it's clear that even this "sub-literary" tradition is finding respectability. These works and many like them have found their ways into college classrooms, and Stephen R. Donaldson's Chronicles of Thomas Covenant the Unbeliever (1977-1983), Terry Brooks' *The Sword of Shannara* (1977), and Piers Anthony's pun-ridden Xanith books (1977-) have appeared with prominence in *The New York Times*' Best Seller List (without even mentioning the successes of Stephen King's horror fiction).

Much seems to be coming together for fantasy as it lives in the American consciousness. Its long and varied tradition is finding a far greater home than many may have imagined, but which others have foreseen.

BIBLIOGRAPHIES OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND SECONDARY RESOURCES

In a class by itself is John Clute and John Grant's recent *Encyclopedia of Fantasy*.* While there a many better sources for author information, it is probably one of the two most valuable volumes in the field. Filled with various publications, terms (superseding Wolfe's *Critical Terms for Science Fiction and Fantasy*), notable people, publishers, genres, theories, and media, it is easily the quickest and handiest of the one-stop desk references.

In addition to Clute and Grant as an essential tool, the "beginning place" for any serious exploration of any subject is Michael Burgess' annotated *Reference Guide to Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror*. It is far and away the best bibliography of bibliographies and an invaluable research guide.

Historically, and up until 1972, fantasy scholars had to be content with the scattered and unsystematic listing of scholarship in the "Prose Fiction" sections of the annual bibliographies of *Publications of the Modern Language Association*. However, in 1972, when the late Thomas D. Clareson (the long-time editor of the journal *Extrapolation*) published *Science Fiction Criticism: An Annotated Checklist*, he inspired the beginning of science-fiction's and fantasy's on-going secondary bibliography, "The Year's Scholarship in Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Scholarship." Conceived in 1975 by Roger C. Schlobin and Marshall B. Tymn and continued by Tymn and a team of scholars following Schlobin's

retirement from the project with the 1980 annual, this seminal tool has appeared in a variety of forms: within the pages of Extrapolation, as separate monographs, and in two book-length accumulations. Originally just devoted to fantasy and sciencefiction scholarship and with an emphasis on literature, it expanded over the years to include the horror genre and media (i.e. film). It is well divided into categories and is indexed and annotated. Beginning in 1984 and up until its demise in 1988. however, the annotations have become occasional (due to its increasing size). making it somewhat less valuable. Any slack that might have existed with its termination has been taken up by the energetic Hal W. Hall's Science Fiction Index: Criticism: An Index to English Language Books and Articles about Science Fiction and Fantasy and Science Fiction and Fantasy Research Index (see the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts' web site for current listings*). Hall lists various publications (i.e., amateur magazines, book reviews, etc.) that are not included in "The Year's Scholarship." He has amplified this with his very worthwhile accumulations, the Science Fiction and Fantasv Reference *Index* and its supplement.

REFERENCE: PRIMARY

The early years of primary book lists, checklists, and bibliographies were distinguished by the highly energetic efforts of selfless and frequently ignored pioneers. Bradford Day, E. F. Bleiler, R. Reginald, and Donald H. Tuck gave valuable direction and resources to fields that were frequently ignored by traditional scholars. Their contributions insured that fantasy research survived its early dark ages.

However, early primary bibliography suffered from an indiscriminate approach that often tossed fantasy literature into too large a pile, and these early efforts mirror the early and continuing difficulty with definition. Some of this was cleared up with the publication of Roger C. Schlobin's *The Literature of Fantasy:* A Comprehensive, Annotated Bibliography of Modern Fantasy Fiction. To date, it is the recognized, seminal listing of fantasy fiction from 1837 to 1979. However, Schlobin's The Literature of Fantasy should be supplemented. The best of these are Marshall B. Tymn, Kenneth J. Zahorski, and Robert H. Boyer's Fantasy Literature: A Core Collection and Reference Guide—which has longer annotations but significantly less coverage—and Neil Barron's Fantasy Literature (see below). The two unannotated bibliographies that include more titles are L. W. Currey's Science Fiction and Fantasy Authors and R. Reginald's Science Fiction and Fantasy Literature. Also, while its non-selectivity hearkens back to the pioneering days of bibliographies of fantastic fiction, E. F. Bleiler's The Guide to Supernatural Fiction is a treasure trove of titles, many not mentioned elsewhere. with valuable annotations. Another similarly unusual bibliography, without which any discussion of fantasy bibliography would be incomplete (and significantly less

entertaining), is George Locke's *A Spectrum of Fantasy*. This eccentric and enjoyable compilation will be a pleasure for any avid pursuer of the unusual and the arcane. Neil Barron's *Fantasy and Horror: A Critical and Historical Guide to Literature, Illustration, Film, TV, Radio, Internet* is scheduled for publication in 1999, will supersede his *Fantasy Literature*, and may add to these resources although its coverage will be limited to authors with, at least, two relevant publications. The *Locus Index** (Brown) is, by far, the best sources for raw information, including such items as ISDN, cover artists, etc. The serious scholar will also not ignore "fan" sites on the worldwide web, most notably the *SCI-Finder** and *The Linköping Science Fiction & Fantasy Archive.**

More current than the printed texts above, if less specific, are two extraordinarily large compilations. Neil Barron's *What Do I Read Next?* lists over 4,800 titles published in an eight-year period beginning in the late 1980's. It includes valuable indices and summarizes each title and identifies its genre. David Pringle's *St. James Guide to Fantasy Writers* is a massive collection of author overviews by noted scholars that nicely complements the individual book emphasis of Frank N. Magill's five-volume *Survey of Modern Fantasy Literature* (see below).

The preeminent bibliographies of short stories in anthologies are William G. Contento's cd-rom *Index to Science Fiction Anthologies and Collections** and Michael Ashley and William Contento's *The Supernatural Index*. Hal Hall's ongoing *Science Fiction and Fantasy Book Review Index* admirably covers this often neglected area. A specialized source that is particularly helpful for its emphasis on multiculturalism is Gary Bowen's *DeColores: A Bibliography of Speculative Fiction by People of Color*,* which cites the works of Jewish, Native American, Eastern European, Latino, Caribbean, and African authors.

Among some of the more controversial and fun primary bibliographies are works like James Cawthorn and Michael Moorcock's *Fantasy: The Hundred Best Books* (also see Pringle *Modern*). Such compilations are always selective and have drawn considerable debate.

Those primarily interested in children's and young adults' fantasy should consult Ruth Nadelman Lynn's *Fantasy for Children*. Some may find its categories questionable and its annotations too brief, but its coverage of this important part of fantasy's literary tradition is extensive. Researchers will find any of the bibliographies listed above valuable. However, Diana Waggoner's *The Hills of Faraway* and Betty Rosenberg's *Genreflecting* (which includes a section on fantasy) should be ignored for the flawed and inaccurate compilations they are.

For a variety of reasons, many types of literature that have caught the popular taste, like fantasy, are filled with authors who use pseudonyms. While many of the bibliographies listed here do include these, there are so many that

often specialized studies are very helpful. The best and most current of these is Susannah Bates' *The Pendex*, which can be supplemented with James A. Rock's *Who Goes There*.

Lastly, for those very serious fantasy mavens, librarians, and scholars who would like to do their own, original research, Michael Burgess' *A Guide to Science Fiction and Fantasy in the Library of Congress Classification Scheme* is helpful. BIO-BIBLIOGRAPHIC-CRITICAL GUIDES

Among the more valuable tools that are available are those that seek to survey large blocks of authors, works, or all of fantasy. These frequently provide extraordinarily helpful introductions (when they are done well). They offer biographical information, critical commentary of varying length and depth, and bibliographic detail. In Addition to David Pringle's St. James Guide to Fantasy Writers, E. F. Bleiler's two-volume tome Supernatural Fiction Writers: Fantasy and Horror is worthy of note. Arranged by a combination of nationality and chronology, its essays survey a significant number of authors (from Apuleius to Roger Zelazny with stress on British and American) and are written by scholars of varying distinction. While some have found it interesting for the authors omitted as much as for those included, the essays do provide valuable insights and information. Of a considerably briefer nature (although with more author coverage) than Bleiler's Supernatural Fiction Writers, Mike Ashley's alphabetical Who's Who in Horror & Fantasy Fiction contains four-hundred short biobibliographic entries with very brief critical commentary.

HISTORY & CRITICISM

Fantasy history and criticism have been growing rapidly in the past decade and receiving far more attention than ever before. However, while fantasy theory, in general, and the British branch, in particular, have prospered, American treatments have not. This may be because, in a worldwide context that stretches from Gilgamish to yesterday, the American portion is small. Also, much of American literature is already placed in traditional categories; for example, it is not unusual to read or hear discussions of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe that do not even allude to the concept of fantasy. The only major book-length study that does focus specifically on American fantasy is Brian Attebery's The Fantasy Tradition in American Literature from Irving to Le Guin. Drawing heavily on fantasy's popular folk origin, fairy tales, and legends and on the American development of its own fairyland, Attebery ranges intelligently among such seemingly dissimilar authors as Edgar Allan Poe, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, L. Frank Baum, Ray Bradbury, James Thurber, and H. P. Lovecraft. His landmark study has offered challenges to American literature scholars that are still largely unmet. For example, the aforementioned early American literature is untouched.

In general, the nature of fantasy still has not surrendered to a definitive by a single scholar. Among newer attempts using postmodern, critical techniques that were first introduced by Lance Olsen in his The Ellipse of Uncertainty, Brian Attebery's Strategies of Fantasy, which applies some of the approaches of Gérard Genette, Seymour Chapman, and Mikhael Bakhtin, has gained recognition for its premise that fantasy is defined best within the shifting parameters of a "fuzzy set." Attebery, as in his earlier The Fantasy Tradition . . . (see above), uses almost exclusively American authors to demonstrate his theory (e.g., Ursula K. Le Guin, Gene Wolfe, John Crowley, Diana Wynne Jones, and Suzette Haden Elgin). Drawing on similar theoretical sources to Attebery, Neil Cornwall's *The Literary* Fantastic also draws heavily on Hume, Rabkin, Jackson, Todorov, and Brook-Rose and stresses the uncanny and horrific in his more international approach although he does include brief discussions of Americans Toni Morrison and Edgar Alan Poe. Yuan Yuan's The Discourse of Fantasy, which focuses on the postmodern concept of "text," is undeniably the most theoretical of the studies cited here and focuses almost exclusively on non-American authors as does Lucie Armitt's *Theorising* [sic] the Fantastic. Richard Mathews, in his Fantasy, includes chapters on Robert E. Howard and Ursula K. Le Guin in his overview of the evolution of fantasy. Curiously, none of the postmodern studies addresses "literature of exhaustion" authors whose work seems to cry out for such attentions, such as Jack Vance or Tim Powers. Kath Filmer's Scepticism [sic] and Hope in Twentieth Century Fantasy Literature is much more traditional than the aforementioned and concentrates on how fantasy "speaks" religion. While Filmer is primarily interested in British authors, she does include chapters on Ursula K. Le Guin, Russell Hoban, and "Some American Fables."

One of the interesting constellations that has emerged in recent years is the focus on the female protagonist. Beginning with Carl B. Yoke's pioneering "Slaying the Dragon Within: Andre Norton's Female Heroes" and followed by Amy J. Ransom's *The Feminine as Fantastic in the Conte Fantastique*, which examines exclusively nineteenth-century French literature and uses the theories of Todorov and Jackson, four book-length studies with American focus are particularly interesting because they explore, in whole or part, the trickster in the form of the female "picara." Anne K. Kaler's historical and wide-ranging *The Picara: From Hera to Fantasy Heroine* is often more descriptive than critical, but it does include discussions of the use of this important and previously neglected character by women writers, such as Suzy McKee Charnas, Marion Zimmer Bradley, Phyllis Ann Karr, Pamela Sargent, Sharon Green, Elizabeth Lynn, Jo Clayton, Janet Morris, Joanna Russ, Sherri S. Tepper, Jane Yolen, Tanith Lee, and Ann Maxwell. Oddly, Marilyn Jurish's *Scheherazade's Sisters*, Lori Landay's *Madcaps, Screwballs, Con Women*, and Sherrie A. Innes' *Tough Girls* do not cite

Yoke, Ransom, or Kaler. Jurish concentrates on the female trickster primarily in folklore and feminist revision literature. Landay's historical approach begins with nineteenth-century literature by women and concludes with contemporary television and cinema with an emphasis on mass culture. Innes concentrates on female warriors, from *Charlie's Angels* to *Xena*, in popular culture on television and in films and comic books with notable chapters on women in science fiction and post-apocalypse media. Of related interest is Charlotte Spivack's *Merlin's Daughters*, which is a feminist revisioning of the wizard, hero, and dragon archetypes in such American authors as Andre Norton, Susan Cooper, Ursula K. Le Guin, Katherine Kurtz, Patricia McKillip, Gillian Bradshaw, and Marion Zimmer Bradley as well as British writers.

Two, older collaborate efforts have made valiant and significant tries at the entire genre. The well-received The *Aesthetics of Fantasy Literature and Art* (Schlobin, ed.) attempts to survey fantasy in both literature and art with a series of essays by the major scholars in the field. Its discussions of such varied aspects as the fantasy reader response, lost-race fantasy, fantasy book illustration, high fantasy, children's fantasy, utopian fantasy, and fantasy's relationships with earlier traditions attempts to provide a primer to the genre.

The five-volume *Survey of Modern Fantasy Literature* (Frank Magill, ed.) takes a different approach, and its strong critical essays are arranged by titles (with author and title indices). While it suffers from an annoying inability to distinguish between fantasy and horror, its five-hundred entries, especially the general ones in volume five, are a vast compendium of useful and easy to use information that covers authors from a variety of nationalities as well as extensively treating American and British ones.

However, the potentially most valuable source is the continuing proceedings of the International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts. Published under varying titles and with varying editors by Greenwood Press, these volumes reflect the vast scope and vitality of the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts, the sponsoring organization. In fact, the interdisciplinary and cross-cultural contents of these volumes, both present and forthcoming, defy any attempt at classification and will long be rich sources for understanding fantasy and the fantastic in all media. A similar effort, although reflecting only a single event, is the far less expansive *Bridges to Fantasy* (ed. George E. Slusser, Eric S. Rabkin, and Robert Scholes), which is the proceedings of the one J. Lloyd Eaton Conference that focused, in part, on fantasy.

Among those earlier scholars who have not been daunted by the challenges fantasy presents to the single mind, five are still highly regarded and cited frequently (for a valuable overview of fantasy theory, see Gary K. Wolfe's "Contemporary Theories of Fantasy," Magill, V, 2220-34). W. R. Irwin's *The*

Game of the Impossible: A Rhetoric of Fantasy is formidable in its literary and philosophical approach. It draws heavily on Victorian and modern literary thought to comment significantly on the intellectual nature of fantasy, especially as it relates to the conspiratorial bond that fantasy demands during the reader's engagement with the authors and their fictions. Colin N. Manlove's The Impulse of Fantasy Literature and Modern Fantasy: Five Studies contain some of the most clearly conceived and sensitive reactions to modern fantasy. Many of the guidelines he establishes have become almost "givens" among fantasy scholars and are especially valuable for the insight they provide into the Romantic and Gothic modes of thought and the nineteenth- and twentieth-century British fantasists (Charles Kingsley, George MacDonald, C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Mervyn Peake). Eric S. Rabkin's The Fantastic in Literature has been among the most popular of the major examinations of modern fantasy, perhaps because it is among the most readable. His approach is sociological in nature and ranges widely among such topics as fairy tales, optical illusions, mysteries, Henry James, and wish fulfillment. While the nature of the reversal of reality that Rabkin discusses has come under attack in recent years, The Fantastic in Literature is still considered by some to be one of the touchstones. Tzvetan Todorov's The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre is among those works that serious students of fantasy return to again and again to discuss. Its often complicated approach to the rhetorical tactics of fantasy and the response to it (which Todorov calls "hesitation") appear to many to identify too general a technique, one which does not identify fantasy specifically enough. Still, it would be hard to measure the pervasive influence Todorov's work has had on modern critical thought. Kathryn Hume's Fantasy and Mimesis: Responses to Reality in Western Literature is helpful and insightful. Deftly building on earlier research and paying valuable attention to the reader-text relationship, Hume places fantasy within the long literary tradition it belongs and shows extensive parallels with representations of reality and non-reality within many historical contexts.

There are a number of other studies worthy of note. Christine Brook-Rose's A Rhetoric of the Unreal: Studies in Narrative and Structure, Especially the Fantastic works from Todorov's earlier study and extends it further into the areas of structuralism, post-structuralism, formalism, and the nature of literary reality. Rosemary Jackson is another follower of Todorov and her Freudian and psychoanalytic Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion seeks to specifically define fantasy as a distinct historical and didactic form of narrative with strong thematic identifications. T. E. Apter's Fantasy Literature: An Approach to Reality also takes a psychoanalytic approach and contends that fantasy, rather than distorting or hiding reality, actually exposes it. It is particularly valuable for its discussions of Joseph Conrad and Nathaniel Hawthorne. All of these studies, like most that

seriously explore fantasy, impress with their range and their disregard for traditional literary classifications.

Among the studies of fantasy, there are those that focus on special topics. For example, Raymond H. Thompson extensively illustrates the ample use of one of the Western world's major legends in combination with fantasy in *The Return from Avalon: A Study of the Arthurian Legend in Modern Fiction*, and Don D. Elgin brings a modern concern to the forefront in *The Comedy of the Fantastic: Ecological Perspectives on the Fantasy Novel*. Hazel Beasley Pierce demonstrates the aforementioned ability of fantasy to shine across the entire spectrum of literary genres and perspectives in *A Literary Symbiosis: Science Fiction/Fantasy Mystery* as does Eric Garber and Lyn Paleo's *Uranian Worlds*, Keith L. Justice's *Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Reference: An Annotated Bibliography of Works About Literature and Film*, Robert E. Weinberg's *A Biographical Dictionary of Science-Fiction and Fantasy Artists*, Patrick D. Murphy's *Staging the Impossible: The Fantastic Mood in Modern Drama*, Scott E. Green's *Contemporary Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Poetry*, and Patrick D. Murphy's and Vernon Hyles' *The Poetic Fantastic: Studies in an Evolving Genre*.

In Fantasists on Fantasy: A Collection of Critical Reflections by Eighteen Masters of the Art, editors Robert H. Boyer and Kenneth J. Zahorski take a different approach than any of the aforementioned works. They have selected important discussions of the art by the artists themselves. While each of these authors frequently demonstrates that there is a marked difference between doing something and understanding what's being done, it is nonetheless enlightening and revealing to discover what George MacDonald, G. K. Chesterton, H. P. Lovecraft, Sir Herbert Read, James Thurber, J. R. R. Tolkien, August Derleth, C. S. Lewis, Félix Martí-Ibáñez, Peter S. Beagle, Lloyd Alexander, Andre Norton, Jane Langton, Ursula K. Le Guin, Mollie Hunter, Katherine Kurtz, Michael Moorcock, and Susan Cooper think of fantasy literature and what they were trying to do in their own creative moments. It is, for example, intriguing to contrast the authors' views with those of a more intellectual (and perhaps more objective) approach, such as Colin Wilson's The Strength to Dream: Literature and the Imagination.

One specialized area in which fantasy has received extensive attention is children's literature. This is expected; fantasy has always been associated with the reading affections of the young (it's one of the major misapprehensions and prejudices). For example, even though Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales* was probably intended for a different audience, its Freudian approach and excursions into the internal psychology of children and their most-loved stories is popular among students of fantasy. C. W. Sullivan III's essay on children's fantasy is a useful introduction to it and its scholarship (cf. Butts 97-111). More specifically related to children's

fantasy literature (as is Ruth Nadelman Lynn's bibliography, which was discussed earlier) are Cathi Dunn MacRae's Presenting Young Adult Fantasy Fiction and Jane Yolen's Touch Magic. MacRae's is a literary study. Yolen's series of light essays is, like Bettelheim's study, more intended toward understanding children's reactions. Yet, it too addresses issues of fantasy and its literature that are at the bedrock of the development of human culture. This trend of examining the childhood mind and discovery things about fantasy is continued in the conversational Pipers at the Gates of Dawn: The Wisdom of Children's Literature, by Jonathan Cott, in its explorations of the creative processes of "Dr. Seuss," Maurice Sendak, William Steig, Astrid Lindgren, Chinua Achebe, and P. L. Travers. Considering that fantasy is one of the most elemental of human characteristics, none of the discoveries about fantasy through children's fantasy fiction should amaze. This point is further amplified and stressed by Marion Lochhead's The Renaissance of Wonder in Children's Literature, which is a unified discussion of children's literature, George MacDonald and other nineteenth-century writers, C. S. Lewis, J. R. R. Tolkien, and, most significantly, Celtic mythology. However, it would be interesting to know what the reactions of such traditional scholars of children's literature, fantasy, and psychology would be to Jack Zipes' Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk & Fairy Tales. This valuable historical study, after carefully exploring the generative nature of folk and fairy tales, moves into the current day and discusses their modern subversion to materialism and marketing.

One of the more striking contrasts in the consideration of the scholarly efforts to explore fantasy is how much the older, amateur efforts pale in comparison. Once thought to be important critical contributions, little is heard anymore of Lin Carter's *Imaginary Worlds: The Art of Fantasy* (whose Ballantine Adult Fantasy series gave the genre a strong popular boost during the 1970's) or L. Sprague de Camp's *Literary Swordsmen and Sorcerers: The Makers of Heroic Fantasy*. There might be some error in neglecting such works, however, because they frequently do provide historical insights that are unavailable elsewhere. SINGLE AUTHOR STUDIES AND BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Individual author studies present a quandary. In many ways, they reflect the popular taste: there are more studies of J. R. R. Tolkien and the Inklings (Charles Williams and C. S. Lewis, especially) than almost the entire remaining corpus of fantasy scholarship. Add the numerous articles written on Ursula K. Le Guin, who in given years, was the longest author entry in "The Year's Scholarship in Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror Scholarship," and the preponderance of a few authors is overwhelming.

At present, author bibliographies and studies are infrequently scattered among numerous professional publishers. Occasional volumes appear within

various Twayne series (see Griffin, Hettinga, Lindskold, Mikkelsen, Rahn, and Reid in the Works Cited) as well as the odd volume from varied sources, such as William A. Senior's laudable Stephen R. Donaldson's Chronicles of Thomas Covenant. The fan press right now is considerably more active, especially Galactic Central's bibliographies, by Phil Stephensen-Payne and Gordon Benson, Jr,* which can be very helpful. The Starmont Reader's Guides to Contemporary Science-Fiction, Fantasy, and Horror Authors (series' editor, Roger C. Schlobin) was the largest of the continuing examinations of these three genres' authors. However, it ceased active publication in 1992 although many of its titles are available from Borgo Press, and volumes are occasionally added.* The following will be of interest to the student of fantasy: Gary K. Wolfe's David Lindsay, Brian Murphy's C. S. Lewis, Lahna Diskin's Theodore Sturgeon, Robert A. Collings' Piers Anthony, Mary T. Brizzi's Philip José Farmer, Rosemary Arbur's Marion Zimmer Bradley, Carl B. Yoke's Roger Zelazny, William Touponce's Ray Bradbury, Marc A. Cerasini and Charles Hoffman's Robert E. Howard, Ronald Foust's A. Merritt, and Kenneth Zahorski's Peter Beagle. Greenwood Press' Contributions to the Study of Science Fiction and Fantasy (series' editors, Donald Palumbo and C. W. Sullivan III) is now larger than the Starmont series, but its volumes are more thematic in nature.* This is the series that also contains the Proceedings of the International Conference for the Fantastic in the Arts. Another series in which fantasy titles occasionally did appear was Writers of the 21st Century (Joseph D. Olander and Martin Harry Greenberg, general editors). Olander and Greenberg have edited Ursula K. Le Guin and Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller have guest edited Jack Vance. Sadly, the G. K. Hall series of author bibliographies, once edited by L. W. Currey and Marshall B. Tymn, is also defunct. However, there were a number of valuable titles released: Kenneth J. Zahorski and Robert H. Boyer's Lloyd Alexander, Evangeline Walton Ensley, Kenneth Morris, Lahna F. Diskin's Theodore Sturgeon, Roger C. Schlobin's Andre Norton (now superseded by the NESFA edition – see Works Cited), and Joseph L. Sanders' Roger Zelazny.

LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Because of fantasy's unrecognized nature among tradition library categories and because of the tendency to lump it together with science fiction, some significant collections remain unrecognized. Hal W. Hall's *Science/Fiction Collections: Fantasy, Supernatural & Weird Tales* did much to give details of the recognized collections, but it is now dated and should be supplemented by Lee Ash's *Subject Collections* and Joanna M. Zakalik's *Directory of Special Libraries and Information Centers*. Well-known repositories include the Merril Collection (formerly the Spaced Out Library) in Montreal, the very impressive L. W. Currey Collection at the University of Texas at Austin , and the J. Lloyd Eaton Collection

at the University of California at Riverside. A query of working scholars on the International Association for the Fantastic in the Arts list serve yielded the following addition recommendations: the Marion E. Wade Collection of the Inklings at Wheaton College, the Science Fiction Foundation at the University of Liverpool, the Lilly Library at Indiana University, the Graham Collection at the University of Sydney, the Paskow Collection at Temple University, the University of Louisville's large Edgar Rice Burroughs' collection, Boston University's Asimov collection (Green), and Bowling Green University, The James and Virginia Schlobin Collection at East Carolina University. However, due to the sometimes uneven reporting, the good researcher will check libraries even when nothing is supposed to be there.

PERIODICALS

Prior to the publication of Marshall B. Tymn and Mike Ashley's *Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Weird Fiction Magazines*, trying to discover the numerous magazines that have existed since the pulp explosions of the 1920's and 1930's involved searching out a large stack of separate volumes (many of them quite rare). Tymn and Ashley's 970-page monster gathers together the efforts of a number of scholars to describe and highlight the contents of 660 international magazines by category with citations of indices to their contents.

Recently, Locus Publications has made the contents of numerous magazines available through Stephen T. Miller and William G. Contento's *Science Fiction*, *Fantasy, & Weird Fiction Magazine Index (1890-1997)* via internet subscription or cd-rom.* This very important reference fills a great void.

Resources for the Study of American Fantasy Literature Through 1998

This bibliography is an attempt to list all significant, book-length bibliographies, studies, and anthologies (both primary and secondary) as well as journals, and internet sites that focus on American fantasy literature. It is arranged by category with an alphabetic index; URLs are cited.

Such attempts at completeness are doomed from their beginnings; the author would welcome corrections and additions at dragon@ateze.com.

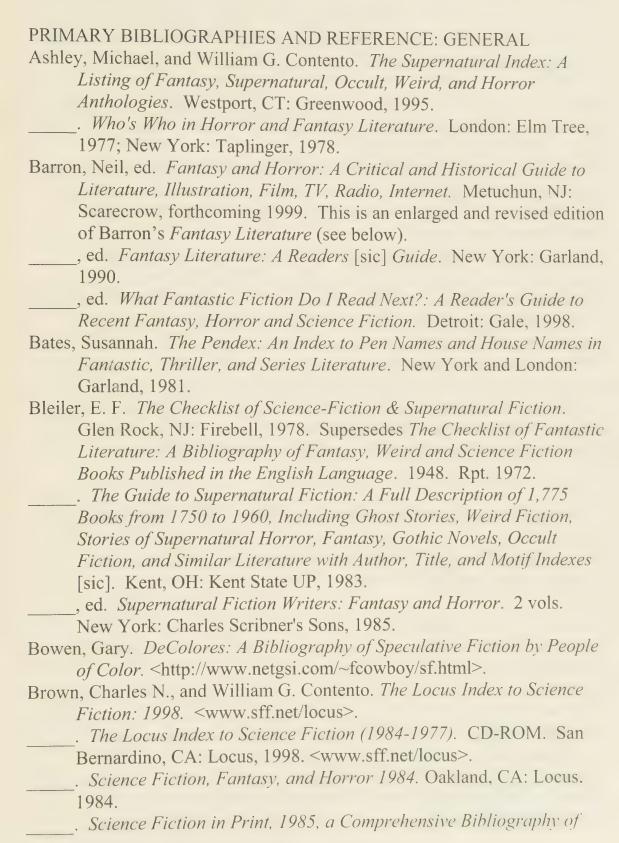
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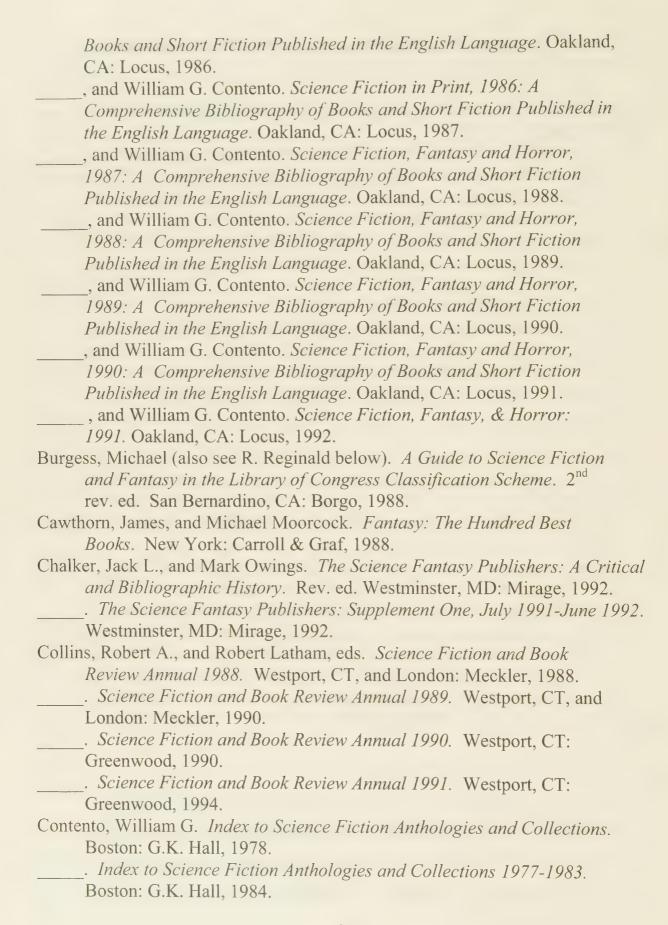
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The James H. and Virginia Schlobin Literature of the Fantastic Collection

East Carolina University's Joyner Library is proud to present its newest special collection, The James H. and Virginia Schlobin Literature of the Fantastic Collection. The original collection, donated by Dr. Roger C. Schlobin, Professor Emeritus of English at Purdue University and a current Assistant Professor at East Carolina University, consisted of over 3,000 books of, and/or linked to, science fiction and fantasy and has already drawn other donations, most notably that of his sister, Susan G. S. Mcgee, who donated nearly 1,000 books of her own. The collection is already considered the largest of its kind in the Southeastern United States and continues to grow.

The Joyner Library's newest collection is named after Dr. Schlobin's parents and primarily consists of literature. The collection contains many works from the more well-known science fiction and fantasy authors such as Philip José Farmer, Marion Zimmer Bradley, André Norton and Roger Zelazny but also includes fan novels and little known, rare chapbooks from sci-fi/fantasy writers, both famous and not. The collection is also partly comprised of many special editions, limited edition, and signed works that are rarer still. Another interesting section of the collection incorporates manuscripts, journals, several rare bibliographies, reference materials, and some of Dr. Schlobin's own scholarship on science fiction and fantasy. An interesting highlight of the collection is a manuscript of Dr. Schlobin's work, *Fire and Fur: The Last Sorcerer Dragon*, the first novel to ever be published exclusively on the Internet. In short, there is now a wealth of materials available for the study of science fiction and fantasy at East Carolina University's Joyner Library, which is rivaled by few libraries in North America.

The James H. and Virginia Schlobin Literature of the Fantastic Collection is non-circulating, but access to resources is simple to obtain. The collection can be found on the fourth floor of Joyner Library on the main campus of East Carolina University, East Fifth Street, Greenville, North Carolina 27858. While the materials that make up the collection must stay in the special collections area, there is access to photocopiers, computers, and other sundry electronic resources in the beautifully appointed room designated for the viewing of the many special collections in the Joyner Library Holdings.

For any inquiries about this specific Special Collection, or to make a donation of materials to the collection, as Joyner Library is interested in increasing the depth and scope of the collection, please contact Ralph Lee Scott, Assistant Head Librarian of Special Collections, and he, or a member of his staff, will be more than willing to assist you with anything you might need. The Special Collections' hours of operation are 8-5 during the week and 10-2 on Saturdays. An

online catalogue is forthcoming in the near future but until then, the librarians in charge of the collection may be contacted by email at scottr@mail.ecu.edu, by phone at 252-328-6671, or by FAX at 252-328-0268. The Fund # for the Schlobin collection is 6-22240 for those wishing to donate any materials that might be appropriate. There is also contact and Collection information on the following website: http://www.ecu.edu/cs-lib/spclcoll/index.cfm.

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